WEIRD ADVENTURES ON OTHER WORLDS—THE UNIVERSE OF THE FUTURE

PLANET COMICS

10¢

MARCH No. 23

REEF RYAN

AND PRINCESS VARA BATTLE THE SCALED SCOURGE OF NEPTUNE'S DUSK-KINGDOM IN

"LIZARD TYRANT OF THE TWILIGHT WORLD"

GALE ALLEN AND THE GIRL SQUADRON OF VENUS

MARS, GOD OF WAR

THE STAR PIRATE

A STIRRING FUTURE-FACT SCIENCE FEATURE

"WILL THE EARTH BE INVADED?"

THE ORIGINAL, SMASH-HIT RANGERS comics

Uncle Sam's Rangers! The toughest, finest fighters in the toughest war of all time! Battling to destroy the foul octopus of Axis tyranny and bring peace and freedom to the earth, the Rangers are the spirit of America, the dauntless high courage by which America has grown and by which alone it can endure. . . . To this spirit and this courage RANGERS COMICS is dedicated. Nothing can be as exciting, as adventurous, as the tremendous drama that is being enacted today by Americans the world over. The heroes in RANGERS are such Americans, carrying the fight to our enemies in action-packed, suspense-crammed adventures—all different, all thrilling!

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Boys-Girls! Solve This Puzzle

It's Fun--Try It!

In this picture are several fairyland characters. Can you name them? It's easy! Untangle the letters below and put them in order so that each word is the name of one of the storybook folks. For example, the letters, "RPTEE APN," No. 2, when placed in the right order, spell "PETER PAN." You will find him in the picture with his pipes playing a jolly tune

1 TELTIL OB-EPEP
2 RPTEE APN
3. YHTUPM YDTUMP
4 EDR GNIIDR OOHD
5 CAKJ NAD ILLJ

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Send me the name of each character in this happy fairyland family and become a member of the Junior Sales Club. I will tell you how to get this Candy Bank FREE.

This bank contains tasty chocolate bars. When you drop a penny in the bank, you can pull open the drawer and there will be a delicious chocolate bar wrapped in tinfoil waiting for you.

When You Solve Puzzle

Write the names of the fairyland folks on a penny postcard or a sheet of paper, then sign your name and address and give your age. Every boy and girl who sends in the names of these characters and joins my Junior Sales Club, will have an opportunity to get this bank FREE Send your answer to

Billy Wade, Junior Sales Club 201, Topeka, Kan.

A FICTION HOUSE MAGAZINE

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THE NEXT ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS (No. 24, MAY) WILL BE ON SALE AT YOUR NEWSSTAND MARCH 10th.

MARS

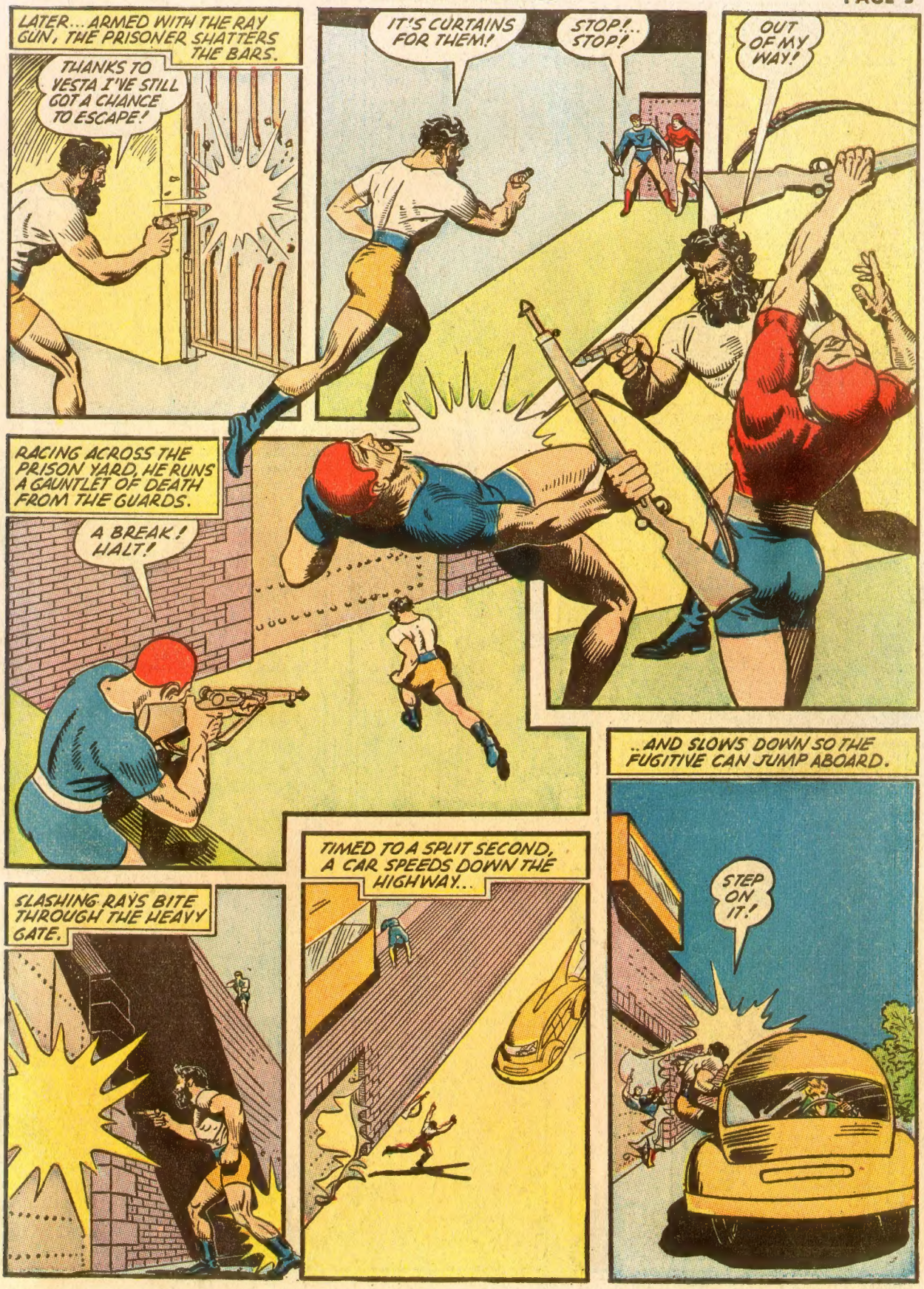
GOD OF WAR

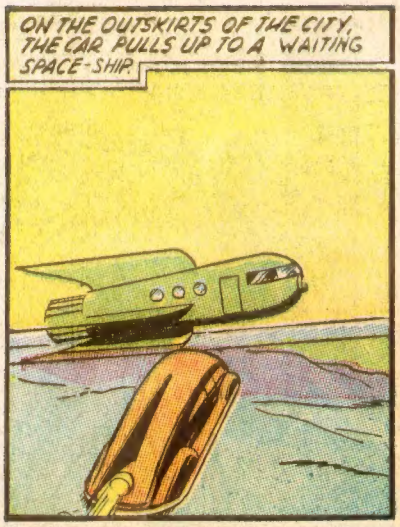
by ROSS GALLON

HAVING CAREFULLY WEIGHED THE EVIDENCE IN THE CRIMINAL CASE OF UNIVERSE vs BLACK MORGAN, THE HIGH INTERPLANETARY COUNCIL ENTERS THE COURT ROOM WITH ITS VERDICT!

COMIC ART COLLECTION

WE, THE AUTHORIZED TRIBUNAL OF THE UNITED INTER-PLANETARY SISTEM, FIND THE PRISONER...
...GUILTY AS CHARGED OF HOLDING UP A VENUS-EARTH EXPRESS SPACE-SHIP AND OF KILLING THE PILOT. WE SENTENCE YOU, BLACK MORGAN, TO FACE THE ATOM SMASHING RAY AND TO BE EXPLODED TO NOTHINGS!
NO, NO, YOU CAN'T DO THIS... I WAS FRAMED!
I'M INNOCENT! I DON'T WANT TO DIE!
COME ALONG, LUG!
ANN, IF I HAD A LITTLE OF THE MONEY HE STOLE IN HIS LIFE, I'D BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE MY RAY FOR BLASTING DERELICT METEORS. THEY ARE A GREAT DANGER TO SPACE TRAVEL.
I WISH YOU WOULD SHOW IT TO ME!
JIM, WON'T YOU TAKE TIME OFF LONG ENOUGH TO ESCORT ME TO THE OLD FASHIONED JITTERBUG BRAWL? I'D LOVE TO GO!
GOOD IDEA, WE'LL PUT ON THOSE FUNNY OLD CUSTUMES THEY WORE IN 1942!
MEANWHILE, BLACK MORGAN WAITS IN HIS CELL.
VISITOR TO SEE YOU!
I HOPE IT'S VESTA!
VESTA! I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT COME! THEY'RE GOING TO KILL ME! I'M AFRAID TO DIE!
QUIT THE CRY-BABY STUFF! I NEVER YET LET YOU DOWN, DID I?


LATER... ARMED WITH THE RAY GUN, THE PRISONER SHATTERS THE BARS.
THANKS TO VESTA I'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE TO ESCAPE!
IT'S CURTAINS FOR THEM!
STOP!.. STOP!
OUT OF MY WAY!
RACING ACROSS THE PRISON YARD, HE RUNS A GAUNTLET OF DEATH FROM THE GUARDS.
A BREAK! HALT!
..AND SLOWS DOWN SO THE FUGITIVE CAN JUMP ABOARD.
STEP ON IT!
TIMED TO A SPLIT SECOND, A CAR SPEEDS DOWN THE HIGHWAY...
SLASHING RAYS BITE THROUGH THE HEAVY GATE.

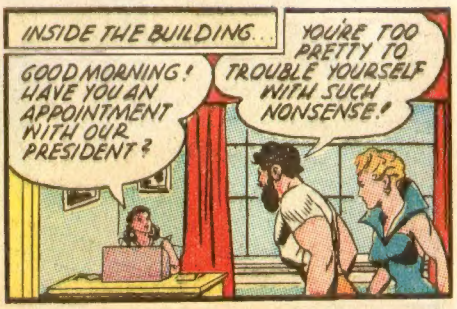

ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY, THE CAR PULLS UP TO A WAITING SPACE-SHIP.

I'LL BE BACK!... YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE LAST OF BLACK MORGAN!
ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME YOU THANKED ME FOR SAVING YOU?

MARS!
AT LAST! I'VE FOUND THE MAN I SEEK! I'LL ENTER MORGAN'S BODY!

SATURATED WITH THE SPIRIT OF MARS, MORGAN TURNS THE SHIP TOWARD A TINY PLANETOID...

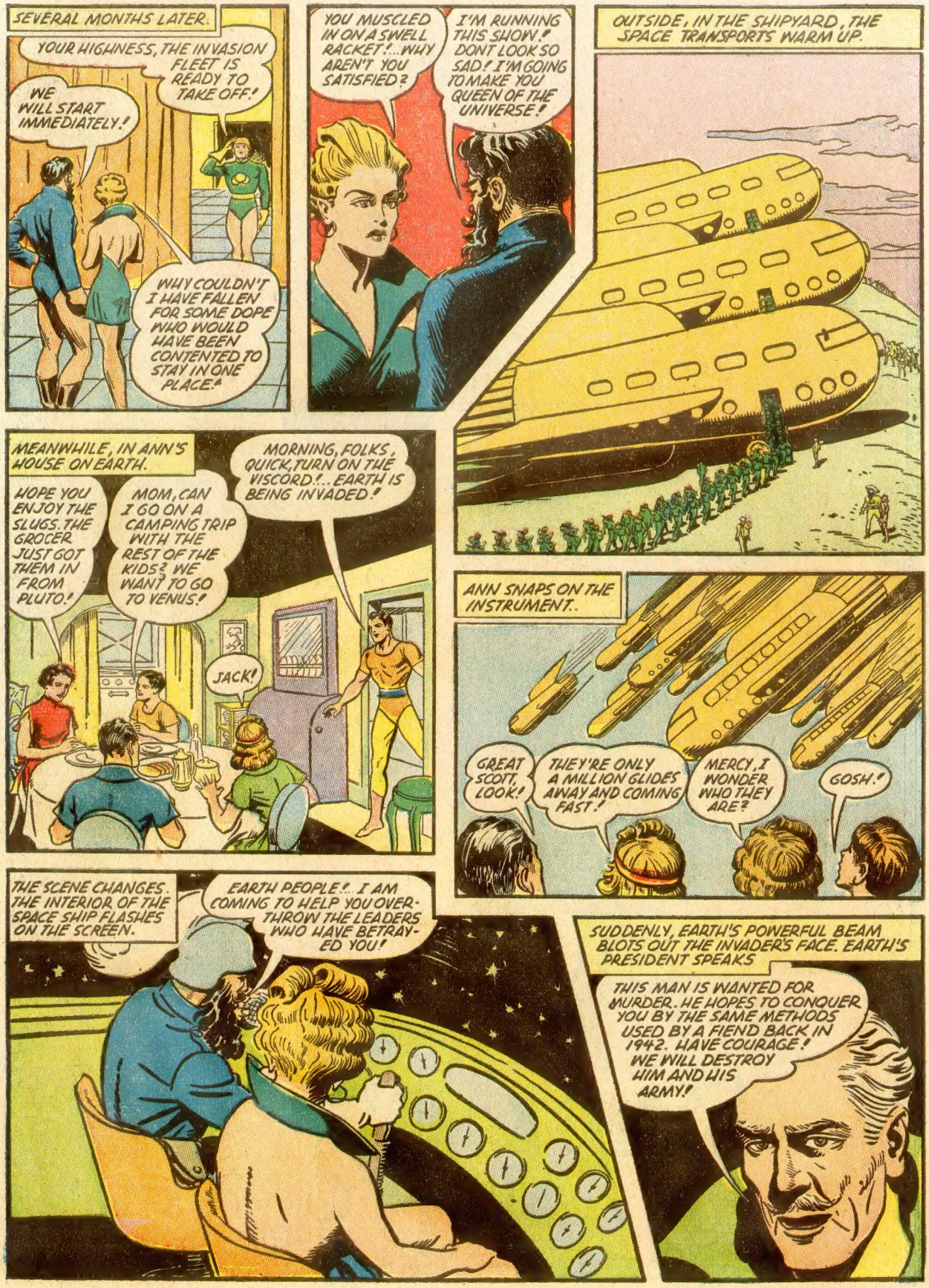
...AND PARKS OUTSIDE THE CITY.
WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
ROGELL, THE MAN WHO HAD ME ARRESTED, IS INSIDE! I INTEND TO VISIT HIM!

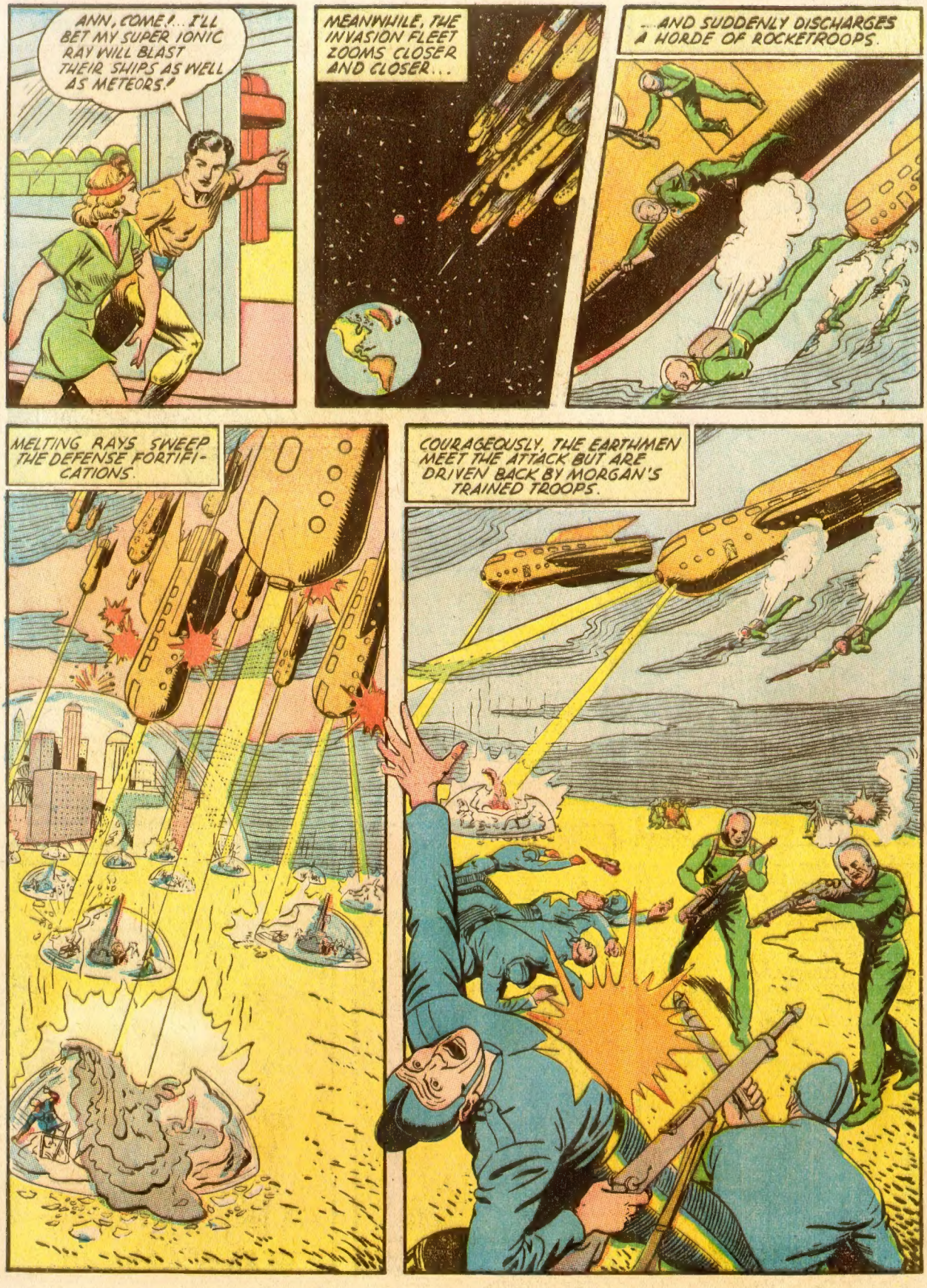

INSIDE THE BUILDING...
GOOD MORNING! HAVE YOU AN APPOINTMENT WITH OUR PRESIDENT?
YOU'RE TOO PRETTY TO TROUBLE YOURSELF WITH SUCH NONSENSE!

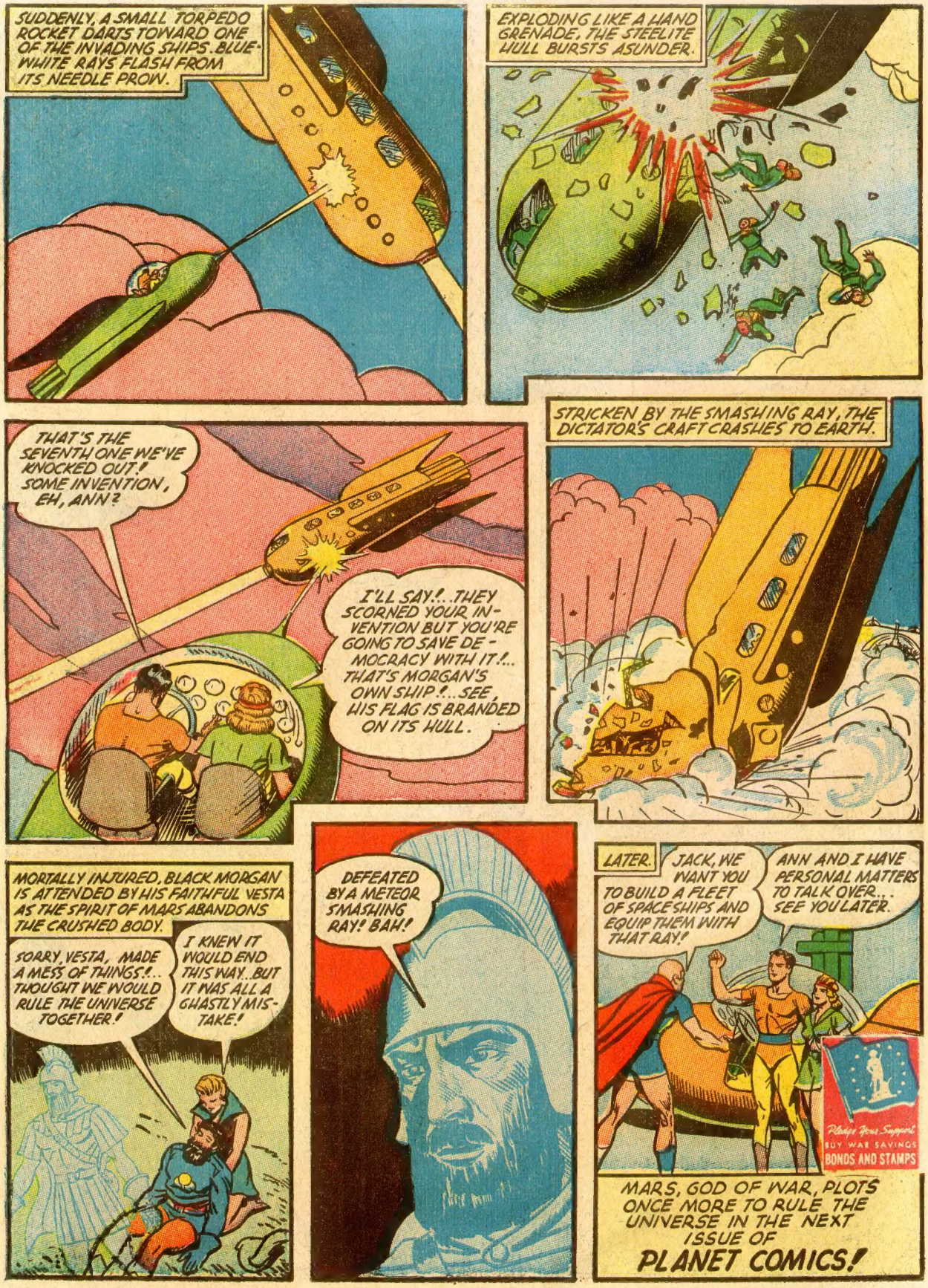
BRUSHING ASIDE THE RECEPTIONIST, THEY ENTER THE OFFICE
WHO ARE YOU? HOW DARE YOU INTRUDE!
ROGELL... I THINK WE'VE MET BEFORE!
YOU CAN'T GO IN THERE!
BE A GOOD GIRL AND SIT TIGHT!

DON'T YOU REMEMBER ME?... THE MAN WHO HELD UP THE SPACE LINER! I'VE COME TO HELP YOU RUN YOUR ARMY!... DO I GET THE JOB?
BLACK MORGAN!... I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD!... DON'T SHOOT!... I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU WANT!

SIT DOWN!.. I THINK WE CAN MAKE A DEAL! PUT THAT GUN IN YOUR POCKET! IT GIVES ME THE CREEPS!
OKAY, YOU CAN START BY APPOINTING ME COMMANDER OF YOUR ARMY!
LATER, IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE
REALIZING THE NECESSITY OF MAINTAINING A STRONG ARMED FORCE, I HAVE APPOINTED THIS MAN TO ORGANIZE AND TAKE SUPREME COMMAND!
GOOD! NOW TO GET TO WORK!
WE WILL START IMMEDIATELY ON A REARMAMENT PROGRAM!... OUR FIRST STEP WILL BE TO BUILD A FLEET OF SPACE SHIPS!
SEVERAL MONTHS LATER...
SO FAR YOU HAVE SUCCEEDED IN YOUR PLANS, WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP?
LEAVE THAT TO ME!... COME I'LL SHOW YOU MY ARMY!
LOOK, THOUSANDS OF TRAINED TROOPS! NOW PERHAPS YOU'LL UNDERSTAND! I'M GOING TO CONQUER THE UNIVERSE! I THINK IT'S TIME WE CALLED ON ROGELL!
SOMETHING TELLS ME I'D HATE TO BE IN HIS SHOES!
AFTER A BRIEF VISIT WITH THE PRESIDENT, MORGAN LEAVES THE OFFICE!
SISTER, I DON'T THINK ROGELL WILL NEED A SECRETARY ANY MORE! YOU'D BETTER JOIN THE ARMY!
I WONDER WHAT HE MEANT? ROGELL'S GONE! THAT ATOM BURSTING GUN! OH..


SEVERAL MONTHS LATER.
YOUR HIGHNESS, THE INVASION FLEET IS READY TO TAKE OFF!
WE WILL START IMMEDIATELY!
WHY COULDN'T I HAVE FALLEN FOR SOME DOPE WHO WOULD HAVE BEEN CONTENTED TO STAY IN ONE PLACE!
YOU MUSCLED IN ON A SWELL RACKET!... WHY AREN'T YOU SATISFIED?
I'M RUNNING THIS SHOW! DONT LOOK SO SAD! I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU QUEEN OF THE UNIVERSE!
OUTSIDE, IN THE SHIPYARD, THE SPACE TRANSPORTS WARM UP.
MEANWHILE, IN ANN'S HOUSE ON EARTH.
HOPE YOU ENJOY THE SLUGS. THE GROCER JUST GOT THEM IN FROM PLUTO!
MOM, CAN I GO ON A CAMPING TRIP WITH THE REST OF THE KIDS? WE WANT TO GO TO VENUS!
MORNING, FOLKS, QUICK, TURN ON THE VISCORD!... EARTH IS BEING INVADED!
JACK!
ANN SNAPS ON THE INSTRUMENT..
GREAT SCOTT, LOOK!
THEY'RE ONLY A MILLION GLIDES AWAY AND COMING FAST!
MERCY, I WONDER WHO THEY ARE?
GOSH!
THE SCENE CHANGES. THE INTERIOR OF THE SPACE SHIP FLASHES ON THE SCREEN.
EARTH PEOPLE!.. I AM COMING TO HELP YOU OVER-THROW THE LEADERS WHO HAVE BETRAY-ED YOU!
SUDDENLY, EARTH'S POWERFUL BEAM BLOTS OUT THE INVADER'S FACE. EARTH'S PRESIDENT SPEAKS
THIS MAN IS WANTED FOR MURDER. HE HOPES TO CONQUER YOU BY THE SAME METHODS USED BY A FIEND BACK IN 1942. HAVE COURAGE! WE WILL DESTROY HIM AND HIS ARMY!


ANN, COME!... I'LL BET MY SUPER IONIC RAY WILL BLAST THEIR SHIPS AS WELL AS METEORS!
MEANWHILE, THE INVASION FLEET ZOOMS CLOSER AND CLOSER...
...AND SUDDENLY DISCHARGES A HORDE OF ROCKETROOPS.
MELTING RAYS SWEEP THE DEFENSE FORTIFICATIONS.
COURAGEOUSLY, THE EARTHMEN MEET THE ATTACK BUT ARE DRIVEN BACK BY MORGAN'S TRAINED TROOPS.


SUDDENLY, A SMALL TORPEDO ROCKET DARTS TOWARD ONE OF THE INVADING SHIPS. BLUE-WHITE RAYS FLASH FROM ITS NEEDLE PROW.
EXPLODING LIKE A HAND GRENADE, THE STEELITE HULL BURSTS ASUNDER.
THAT'S THE SEVENTH ONE WE'VE KNOCKED OUT! SOME INVENTION, EH, ANN?
I'LL SAY!...THEY SCORNED YOUR INVENTION BUT YOU'RE GOING TO SAVE DEMOCRACY WITH IT!... THAT'S MORGAN'S OWN SHIP!...SEE, HIS FLAG IS BRANDED ON ITS HULL.
STRICKEN BY THE SMASHING RAY, THE DICTATOR'S CRAFT CRASHES TO EARTH.
MORTALLY INJURED, BLACK MORGAN IS ATTENDED BY HIS FAITHFUL VESTA AS THE SPIRIT OF MARS ABANDONS THE CRUSHED BODY.
SORRY, VESTA, MADE A MESS OF THINGS!... THOUGHT WE WOULD RULE THE UNIVERSE TOGETHER!
I KNEW IT WOULD END THIS WAY...BUT IT WAS ALL A GHASTLY MISTAKE!
DEFEATED BY A METEOR SMASHING RAY! BAH!
LATER.
JACK, WE WANT YOU TO BUILD A FLEET OF SPACESHIPS AND EQUIP THEM WITH THAT RAY!
ANN AND I HAVE PERSONAL MATTERS TO TALK OVER... SEE YOU LATER.
Pledge Your Support BUY WAR SAVINGS BONDS AND STAMPS
MARS, GOD OF WAR, PLOTS ONCE MORE TO RULE THE UNIVERSE IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF
PLANET COMICS!

REEF RYAN

By HUGH FITZHUGH

NORTH BEYOND THE VOLCANO VOID, IN THE INNER WORLD OF NEPTUNE, LIES THE ROYAL PROVINCE OF XALAN... HERE **THE TABESS** RULES BY ANCIENT RIGHT, WITH THE EARTHMAN EXILE, **REEF RYAN**, AS SWORN PROTECTOR OF HER LIFE AND HER EMPIRE...

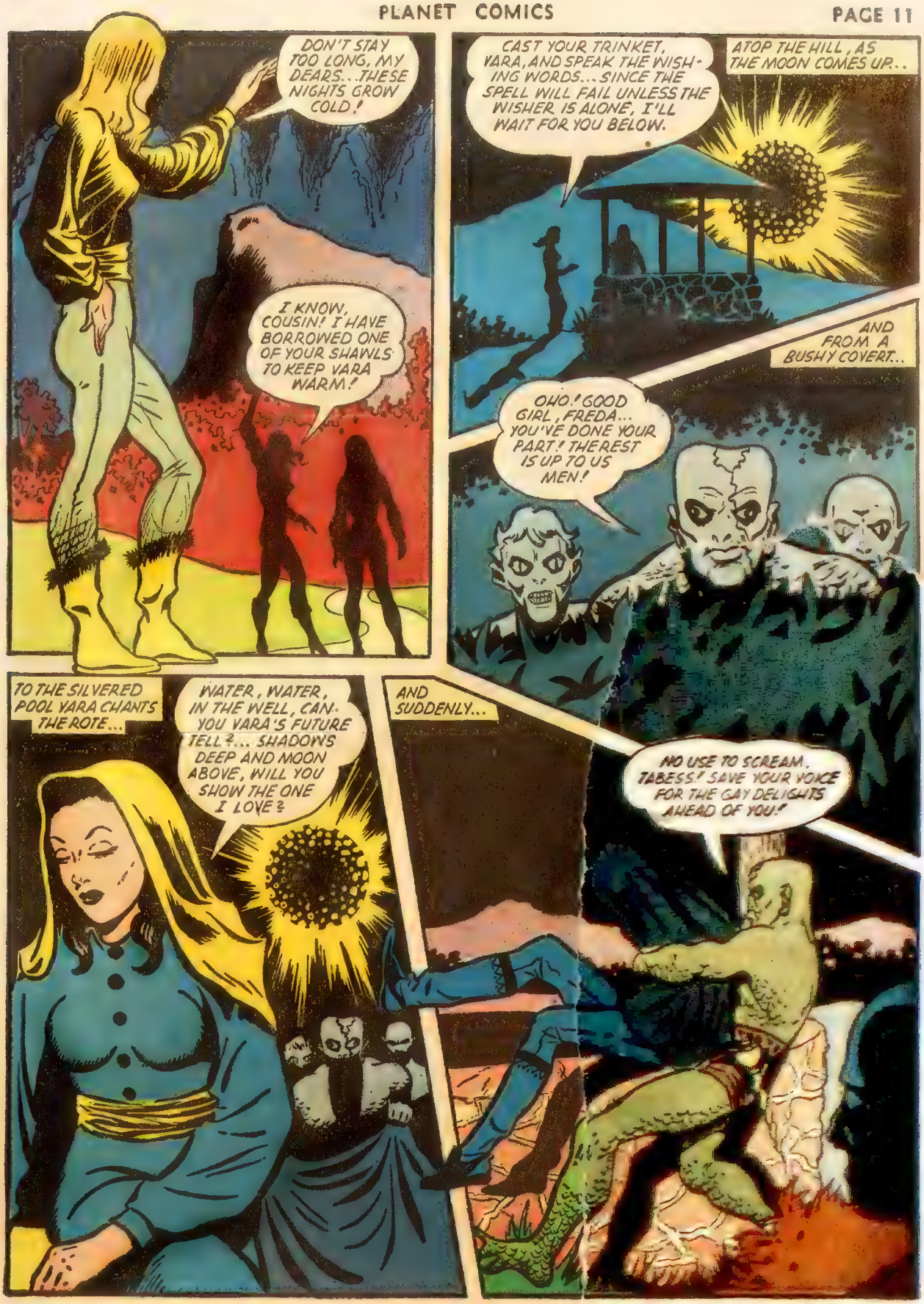
ONE AFTERNOON...

GOOD HUNTING, REEF... HERE, FLY MY SCARF FROM YOUR LANCE FOR LUCK!

THANKS, FREDA. BUT I... I WEAR VARA'S SCARF AS MY GAGE OF COMBAT...

VARA'S, EH? AM NOT I AS CHARMING AS THAT FLUFFY NIT-WIT?

AND AS REEF RIDES FORTH, A LURKING WATCHER LEERS...
RIDE ON, EARTH-SCUM! RIDE WITH A THOUSAND FOND FAREWELLS FROM YOUR FRIEND...THE BARDA!
LATER, WITH THE FALL OF NIGHT...
AND NOW... HA HA!...I'LL GO A-WOOING!
THE BARDA! YOU FOOL...WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE? IT MEANS THE HEADSMAN'S AX IF THE GUARDS SHOULD FIND YOU!
BUT YOU WOULD NOT BETRAY ME, FREDA! I KNOW TOO MANY OF YOUR SECRETS. I KNOW YOUR INNER HEART HATES YOUR COUSIN, THE TABESS, SO LISTEN...
YOU ARE OF THE ROYAL BLOOD, FREDA... WHY SHOULD YOU BE A MERE MAID-IN-WAITING WHEN A THRONE MIGHT BE YOURS IF YOU JOIN WITH ME? NOW HERE'S MY PLAN...
HOURS LATER, A SLEEPLESS WOMAN STILL BROODS...
JOIN WITH HIS FATNESS FOR THE NEW RULE IN XALAN, EH? HELP HIM TO KIDNAP MY COUSIN? ...OH, NO, BARDA! YOU'RE TOO TREACHEROUS FOR FREDA, AND YOUR PLANS TOO RISKY! BUT SUPPOSE...
NEXT EVENING...
THE TABESS TELLS ME, VARA, THAT YOU HAVE NEVER SEEN OUR WISHING WELL. WOULD YOU LIKE TO VISIT IT WITH ME?
OH, YES! I HEARD SO MUCH ABOUT IT! CAST A TRINKET IN THE WATER, THEY SAY, AND THE FACE OF YOUR TRUE LOVE APPEARS. SHALL WE GO?


DON'T STAY TOO LONG, MY DEARS...THESE NIGHTS GROW COLD!
I KNOW, COUSIN! I HAVE BORROWED ONE OF YOUR SHAWLS TO KEEP VARA WARM!
CAST YOUR TRINKET, VARA, AND SPEAK THE WISHING WORDS...SINCE THE SPELL WILL FAIL UNLESS THE WISHER IS ALONE, I'LL WAIT FOR YOU BELOW.
ATOP THE HILL, AS THE MOON COMES UP..
AND FROM A BUSHY COVERT..
OHO! GOOD GIRL, FREDA... YOU'VE DONE YOUR PART! THE REST IS UP TO US MEN!
TO THE SILVERED POOL VARA CHANTS THE ROTE...
WATER, WATER, IN THE WELL, CAN YOU VARA'S FUTURE TELL?... SHADOWS DEEP AND MOON ABOVE, WILL YOU SHOW THE ONE I LOVE?
AND SUDDENLY...
NO USE TO SCREAM, TABESS! SAVE YOUR VOICE FOR THE GAY DELIGHTS AHEAD OF YOU!

DAWN FINDS THE BARDA'S THUGS AND THEIR CAPTIVE AT THE EDGE OF THE OUTLAW MARSHES...
AND, SAFE FROM PURSUIT, THE RENEGADE HALTS TO GLOAT UPON HIS PRIZE...
NOW, MY DEAR TABESS... AY-EEEE! I'VE BEEN TRICKED! IT'S THE EARTH-MAN'S MILK - SKINNED PET!
BUT SOON THE BARDA'S CURSES FADE TO GRUMBLES AS HE EVILLY SCHEMES TO MAKE THE BEST OF DEFEAT...
YES, WE'LL TAKE HER ON WITH US. I'LL FIND A USE FOR HER... LOOSE THE GIBELS, KRAGG!
A BURLY HENCHMAN ASCENDS THE SLOPE. PULLEYS GROAN AS HE TUGS A HAWSER, AND NOW THE EARTH ECHOES A MONSTROUS GRUNTING...
A HUGE GATE LIFTS, AND FROM A NOISOME CLIFFSIDE CAVERN TWO NIGHTMARE SHAPES COME WADDLING...
THE GIBELS GUARD THE PASS, MY PRETTY, AND THIS PASS IS THE ONE ENTRANCE TO YOUR HAPPY NEW HOME IN THE HUMP BACK!

BACK AT XALAN CASTLE, REEF RETURNS FROM THE HUNT ASTRIDE HIS IZZARD
THERE'S THE TABESS AND FREDA BUT WHERE'S VARA?
HAIL, TABESS! I WAS DELAYED AT BUT WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHY DO YOU STARE AT ME?
OH, REEF! IT'S TERRIBLE VARA'S GONE!
FREDA GLIBLY TELLS HER TWO-TONGUED VERSION OF THE CAPTURE.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE BARDA, REEF.. OUR MEN PURSUED BUT LOST THE TRAIL!
BUT, REEF... COME BACK! SHE IS DEAD BY NOW! THEY MUST HAVE TAKEN HER TO THE HUMPBACK HILLS WHERE NO MORTALS CAN SURVIVE!
BUT REEF RUSHES, HEEDLESS, TO THE ROYAL STABLES...
HERE'S OUR BEST BUT I WARN YOU HE CANNOT ENDURE THE VAPORS!
THE BEAT OF GIANT WINGS EATS THE DISTANCE, AND NOW APPEARS THE SKY-SARGASSO OF MISTS THAT OVERLAYS THE FANTASTIC HUMPBACK MOUNTAINS..
THAT ENTRY IS MY ONLY CHANCE.. BUT HOW CAN I PASS THOSE MONSTERS?
KNOWING HE CANNOT BREATHE THE EVIL ATMOSPHERE BEYOND, REEF LANDS AT THE BARRIER CLIFF AND THERE HE SIGHTS...

GRIMLY HE DRAWS HIS SABRE BLADE, AND DESPERATELY HE ADVANCES...
THE YAMMERING GIBELS, BLOOD-STARVED, CLUMP ON IN SLAVERING FURY...
AND IN FURY REEF'S SWORD BITES BACK!
THE WOUNDED GIBEL REARS IN PAIN, AND REEF DARTS FOR THE KILLING UNDER-STROKE...
WHIRLING, AS THE FIRST BEAST FALLS, HE JABS WITH ALL HIS MIGHT AT THE SECOND...
LUCK'S WITH ME! THESE CAVERN MAZES ARE FREE OF POL-LUTED AIR... BUT WHICH SHALL I FOLLOW?
AS HE PAUSES, UNCERTAIN, AT A BRANCHING PASSAGE.
VARA'S GLOVE! SHE KNEW I'D COME, AND SHE BLAZED THE TRAIL FOR ME!
MEANWHILE, IN THE EERIE OUTLAW STRONGHOLD...
WHY ARE YOU POOR? WHY DO YOU HUNGER? IT IS BECAUSE YOUR WEREWILE HAG NO LONGER BREWS STRONG MAGIC... BUT I, THE BARDA, HAVE A NEW MAIDEN TO BE YOUR WEREWILE QUEEN!

TAKE HER, YE PRIESTS! LET THE SORCERER'S THRONE TEACH HER THE SPELLS AND THRALLS AND HEXES OF THE SPIRITS THAT PROTECT THIS REALM!
THE EMANATIONS OF THE MOUNTAINS, VARA, WILL FILL YOU WITH WISDOM... HA HA!
YOUR BRAIN WILL KNOW BLACK SECRETS, VARA, AND YOU WILL TURN THEM TO OUR USE... RELEASE THE OCCULT BEAM, PRIEST!
AND INSTANTLY, FROM THE CAVERN ROOF, A LAMBENT RAY PLAYS OVER THE THRONE... AN AGONY LIKE MADNESS POSSESSES VARA'S FLESH AND RACKS HER BONES IN EVIL TRANSFORMATION!
BUT AS HER TORTURED CRIES RESOUND...
HALT! BLIND THAT BEAM! UNTIL THE SPIRITS FREE MY SOUL, THERE CAN BE NO OTHER WEREWILE!
RELEASE THIS CREATURE, WHEN SHE WAKES FROM HER TRANCE SHE WILL KNOW TOO MANY SECRETS! SHE MUST DIE BY THIS SILVER ARROW WHICH ALONE CAN KILL A WEREWILE!
NOT SO FAST, HAG! GIVE ME THAT ARROW.. HAH!... AND I'LL SHOW YOU THE BARDA'S MAGIC!

AND AS REEF PEERS UNSEEN FROM AN OUTCROPPING LEDGE..
DIE, WITCH... DIE.!
PIERCED TO THE HEART, THE WERWILE FALLS...
AND WITH THE DYING CROAK OF HER VOICE, THE CAVERN ROCKS, THE WALLS GROAN, THE MOUNTAIN SHUDDERS!
ABOVE AND BELOW THE GREAT ROCKS CRACKLE, AS IF THE SPIRITS OF THE MOUNTAINS WRITHED IN DEATH - THROE MOCKERY OF THEIR SLAIN PRIESTESS. HUGE BOULDERS LOOSEN...!
...AS REEF SPRINTS TO VARA'S RESCUE!
NOW HE GRASPS HER PITIFUL FORM, FLEEING THE DESTRUCTION...
AND AS HE REACHES THE OPEN, THE MOUNTAIN CRUMBLES THUNDEROUSLY BEHIND HIM...
IN A GREEN GLADE HE PLACES HER DOWN, CALLING HER NAME, AND SUDDENLY.. MIRACULOUSLY..
VARA IS HERSELF ONCE MORE!
BUT REEF... WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT MIRACLE RESTORED ME
PERHAPS THE MOUNTAIN COLLAPSE RELEASED THE POWER THAT CHANGED YOU, VARA! I DON'T KNOW... AND AS LONG AS YOU'RE YOU AGAIN, I DON'T CARE! COME ON... LET'S GO!
BUT AS THEY HAPPILY START AWAY, A HUMAN SNAKE CRAWLS FORTH FROM A CREVICE IN THE ROCKY CHAOS BEHIND THEM...
OHO! SCURRY HOME, FOOLS, AND TELL I AM DEAD! - BUT THE MAGIC ARROW SAVED ME, AND WITH ITS HELP THE BARDA WILL SOON RULE ALL XALAN!
NEPTUNE'S INNER WORLD BRINGS NEW AND STRANGE ADVENTURES TO REEF AND VARA IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

Star Pirate
By LEONARDO VINCI
ON THE MEANEST BYWAY OF THE TINIEST PLANETOID ON THE OUTMOST EDGE OF SPACE PERCHES GARZA'S VENDORIUM. HERE, WHERE THE OUTLAW DREGS OF THE SYSTEM GATHER, STAR PIRATE AND TRODY HAVE FOUND HAVEN.
WE'VE GOT TO QUIT THIS RAT-HOLE, TRODY. IT'S SAFE, YES... BUT JUST THE SAME..
I KNOW... THE SCUM THAT HANGS AROUND HERE WOULD SICKEN THE SOUL OF A ROBOT!
NOTICE TO ALL EARTHMEN, ALL MARTIANS, ALL VENUSIANS... ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE EXTRO-SOLAR SYSTEM! TEN THOUSAND DOUBLOON-GRADS FOR THE CAPTURE, DEAD OR ALIVE, OF STAR PIRATE!

SUDDENLY, THROUGH THE SWINGING DOOR...
FILL UP A GLASS! I'VE JUST ESCAPED FROM ZEV! THE STAR PIRATE, CURSE HIS SOUL, HAD ME WHIPPED WHEN I REFUSED TO WORK!
DRAW AND DEFEND YOURSELF! NO MAN LIVES WHO CAN CURSE AND LIE ABOUT ME TO MY FACE!
THE STARTLED STRANGER UNSHEATHS HIS BLADE...
CURSED YOU! LIED ABOUT YOU! IS THIS FOOL DRUNK OR MOON-MAD?
MY WRIST...
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN YOUR THROAT IF EXPLANATIONS WERE NOT NEEDED. SPEAK OUT!
BUT I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU! I WAS SERVING TIME ON THE PLANETOID ZEV, SEE, WHEN THIS STAR PIRATE MUSCLED IN ON THE VIVRAM CONCESSION. HE FORCED US TO WORK THE MINES.
HE DID, EH? HMM... KEEP TALKING, BROTHER!
ZEV!... NEVER HEARD OF THE PLACE!
NEITHER HAVE I, TRODY. BUT I KNOW WHERE THE KEY TO IT IS!
THE HIGH COURT OF MAB, STAR PIRATE HAS LEARNED, SENTENCES ALL ITS CONVICTS TO ZEV... SO NOW HIS SPACE SHIP "VENGEANCE" SPEEDS TOWARDS MAB... FIRST STOP ON THE TRAIL OF MYSTERY!

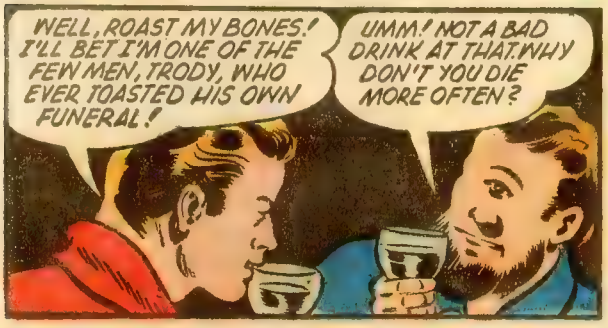
LONG SPACE MILES LATER, STAR PIRATE AND HIS AIDE COUNTER-BLAST TO A LANDING AT THE MABIAN ROCKET-DROME..
WELL, HERE WE ARE! WHAT'S NEXT?
OUR NEXT STEP, TRODY, IS TO GET OURSELVES FLUNG INTO JAIL!
DOWN THE BUSY THOROFARE OF THE CAPITAL CITY...
WE'LL FOLLOW THESE MARTIANS UNTIL WE MEET A LAWMAN. AND THEN...
THERE'S AN OFFICER NOW! COME ON, TRODY!
STICK 'EM UP, BUG-EYES!
IT'S A HOLDUP! HELP!
HERE COMES THE LAW!
AND IN A MOMENT...
THEY TRIED TO ROB ME, LAWMAN!
TOUGH GUYS, EH? WELL, WE KNOW HOW TO HANDLE SUCH RIFFRAFF!
MEEK AS LAMBS, THE ADVENTURERS ARE LED TO THE COURTHOUSE.
MAGNUS, HIGH JUDGE OF THIS DISTRICT, KNOWS THE TREATMENT FOR THUGS LIKE YOU!

HIGHWAY ROBBERY, YOUR HONOR...CAUGHT 'EM RED-HANDED!
THERE IS NO PLACE ON MAB FOR SUCH CRIMINAL SCUM! I HEREBY SENTENCE YOU TO TEN ASTRAL CALENDS OF HARD LABOR AT OUR PENAL COLONY ON ZEV!
BUT AS THE PRISONERS TURN FROM THE BAR...
YOUR HONOR... JUDGE MAGNUS! IT'S REVOLT YOU MUST HELP!
MY NAME IS GELDA, YOUR WORTHINESS! I COME AS MESSENGER FROM THE LOYAL CITIZENS OF ZEV TO PLEAD FOR HELP. A FIEND NAMED STAR PIRATE HAS SEIZED THE PLANETOID! HE IS FORCING EVERYBODY INTO THE VIVRAM MINES..
WHAT'S THIS? CLEAR THE COURT! I'LL HEAR THIS GIRL IN PRIVATE!
THE PRISONERS ARE HERDED INTO ELECTRO-CELLS...THAT NIGHT, THE GUARDS PROD THEM TOWARD THE HULK OF A PENAL TRANSPORT.
AND IN THE CONFINEMENT QUARTERS BELOW...
GELDA! AREN'T YOU THE GIRL WE SAW IN COURT? I THOUGHT THE JUDGE WAS GOING TO HELP YOU!
SO DID I! BUT WHEN THE COURT WAS CLEARED HE DECLARED THAT MY STORY OF REVOLT ON ZEV WAS NONSENSE! HE ORDERED MY DEPORTATION!

THE PRISON-CRAFT BUMBLES THE SPACEWAY MILES, WITH FASTER SHIPS SCOUTING SCORNFULLY PAST...
AND AFTER A WEARY JOURNEY, THE PRISONERS ARE UNLOADED UPON A GRIM AND BARREN TERRAIN, STAGGERING THROUGH A THIN AND BREATHLESS OUTER ATMOSPHERE...
THEY ARE MARCHED INTO THE AIR-LOCK CHAMBER THAT LEADS INTO THE HEART OF ZEV...
AS A HUDDLE OF COWED CONVICTS WAIT IN THE DETENTION PEN...
GOT YOUR BREATH BACK, TRODY? ALL SET?
NOW'S AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY, I RECKON!
AND SUDDENLY TWO ROUGH-AND-TUMBLE TERRORS SPRING UPON THE GUARDS...
A FLURRY OF BLOWS CLEARS THE WAY FOR ESCAPE!
YOU SAID YOU COULD SHOW US A GETAWAY, GELDA! WHICH WAY FROM HERE?
BUT WHERE NOW? THEY'RE RIGHT BEHIND US!
INTO THIS TRAP DOOR... QUICK!

IN THE SUB-CAVE HIDEOUT OF LEV'S FORMER LEADERS...
IT'S GELDA! DID THAT SMUGGLER SHIP GET YOU TO MAB, GIRL? IS THE HIGH COURT SENDING THE ARMED HELP WE NEED?
THE HIGH COURT SENT ME BACK IN MANACLES, AXOR! DON'T ASK ME WHY?
I TOLD YOU AXOR WAS A FOOL TO SEND A GIRL ON SUCH A MISSION! NOW STAR PIRATE CAN HUNT US DOWN AT HIS LEISURE!

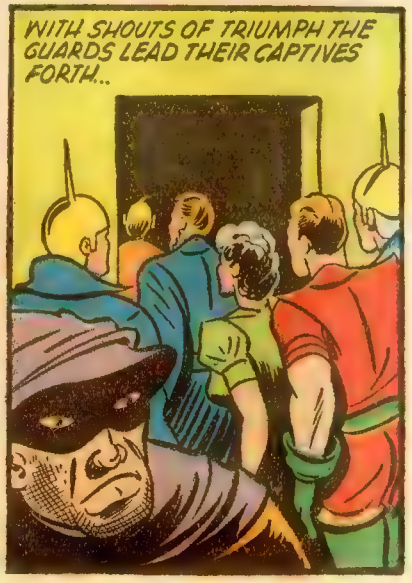
WITHOUT HELP FROM MAB WE ARE LOST! OUR ONLY CHOICE IS TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH... AND TO KILL STAR PIRATE BEFORE WE PERISH!
TO STAR PIRATE'S DEATH! MAY HIS BONES ROAST LONG IN INFERNO!


WELL, ROAST MY BONES! I'LL BET I'M ONE OF THE FEW MEN, TRODY, WHO EVER TOASTED HIS OWN FUNERAL!
UMM! NOT A BAD DRINK AT THAT. WHY DON'T YOU DIE MORE OFTEN?

BUT SUDDENLY, WITH A CLASH OF STEEL, GUARDS POUR THROUGH THE HIDEOUT PORTAL...
IT'S MY FAULT! I'VE LED THEM HERE!
MIGHT AS WELL FACE IT NOW AS LATER. GELDA!

THE TRAPPED MEN BATTLE FIERCELY...

BUT... THEY ARE BETTER ARMED... TOO MANY OF THEM! YIELD, MEN, AND LIVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY!

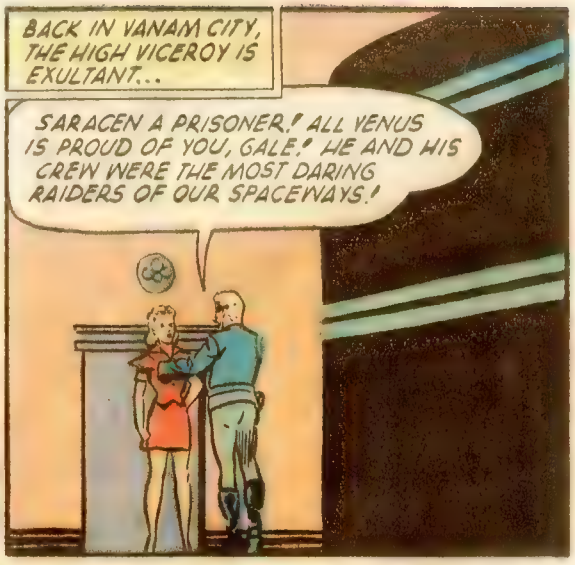

WITH SHOUTS OF TRIUMPH THE GUARDS LEAD THEIR CAPTIVES FORTH...

AND THE FALSE STAR PIRATE PRONOUNCES THE DOOM UPON THEM.
AHA! THE WHOLE DEVIL'S CREW WHO OPPOSE ME! TO THE ARENA WITH THEM, MEN! SOUND THE CALL FOR ALL SUBJECTS TO ASSEMBLE AND SEE THE JUDGMENT OF THE DASTA!
IN THE PRISON'S DANKEST DUNGEON...
THE DASTA! ...OH, NO! IT'S TOO CRUEL... TOO TERRIBLE!
YOU WHO LED THE ESCAPE... YOU'RE FIRST! COME ON!
THERE MUST BE SOME WAY OUT OF THIS... BUT WHAT?
IN THE BANKED ARENA STAR PIRATE SHOUTS A FIGHTING APPEAL...
PEOPLE OF ZEV! WILL YOU LIVE YOUR LIVES AS SLAVES? RISE AND DESTROY YOUR TYRANT MASTERS!
QUICK! RELEASE THE GATE FOR THE DASTA!
A MASSIVE BARRIER LIFTS WITH A GROAN, AND INTO THE ARENA CHARGES...
WOW! TEN RAY-GUNS WOULDN'T STOP HIM! BUT MAYBE...
THREE TONS OF ARMOR-PLATED BRUTE BEAR DOWN ON HIM... BUT AT THE FINAL INSTANT...
HERE'S A LITTLE TRICK, DASTA, THAT I LEARNED FROM AN EARTHMAN CASTAWAY!
A FLUTTER OF CLOTH TO BLIND THE MURDEROUS BEAST... THEN A GRAB AT THE HORN... A LEAP...
AND STAR PIRATE RIDES THE BELLOWING BULK OF A LIVE TORPEDO...

TWO GIANT HANDS REACH OUT..ALL THE STRENGTH OF MIGHTY MUSCLES WRENCHES AND TUGS AND STRAINS...
AND AS THE DASTA TOTTERS DOWN...
ON EARTH THEY CALL IT THE BULLDOGGER'S TWIST. IT WAS YOUR OWN WEIGHT FALLING THAT BROKE YOUR NECK, DASTA!
GUARDS! SEIZE HIM!
HERE'S A TROPHY OF THE BATTLE, TYRANT...FROM ONE STAR PIRATE TO ANOTHER!
THE WHIZZING IVORY MISSILE STABS INTO A SCREAMING TARGET.. AS THE TYRANT FALLS, HIS MASK DISLODGES...
YOU...? YOU ARE STAR PIRATE? AAUGH...
IT IS MAGNUS, HIGH JUSTICE OF MAB, WHO HAS BETRAYED YOU! UP CITIZENS AND ATTACK HIS GUARDS! UP AND FIGHT FOR YOUR FREEDOM!
INFURIATED ZEVIANS HURL THEMSELVES UPON THE TYRANT'S STARTLED HENCHMEN...
AND LATER, WITH SWIFT VICTORY WON...
OUR PEOPLE WILL NOT FORGET, STAR PIRATE! BANDIT THEY MAY CALL YOU, BUT YOUR NAME WILL ALWAYS BE HONORED IN THE ANNALS OF ZEV!
STAR PIRATE, FREE LANCE ROVER OF THE WILDERNESS VOIDS, ROCKETS INTO NEW AMAZEMENTS IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF PLANET COMICS!

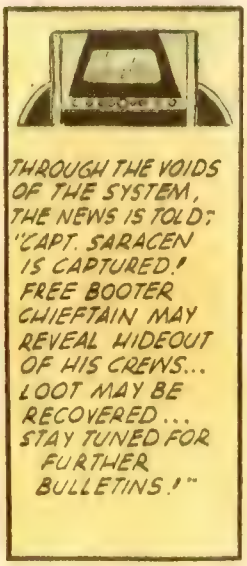
GALE ALLEN
and the GIRL SQUADRON
by DOUGLAS McKEE
SZX! SIGNAL SZX REPORTING ROCKET-SCOUT WRECK ON VANDALIA... MAY BE CAPT. SARACEN! SZX! UTMOST DANGER!
WITH THE VANDALIAN WASTES GLOWING EERILY BELOW, GALE ISSUES SQUADRON ORDERS...
DISINTEGRATORS READY! ALL SHIPS FOLLOW IN TO LANDING! EXTREME CAUTION...THIS MAN IS A KILLER!
MOMENTS LATER...
YOU'RE IN THE NET, SARACEN! COME OUT WITH YOUR HANDS UP!
A SAAF

BETRAYED... MY ARM... NO USE TO FIGHT! ALL RIGHT, YOU VIXENS... YOU'VE GOT ME!


BACK IN VANAM CITY, THE HIGH VICEROY IS EXULTANT...
SARACEN A PRISONER! ALL VENUS IS PROUD OF YOU, GALE! HE AND HIS CREW WERE THE MOST DARING RAIDERS OF OUR SPACEWAYS!

AND IN THE WEARY PRISONER'S CELL, THE VICEROY ARGUES SMOOTHLY...
WHY FORCE US TO TORTURE THE TRUTH FROM YOU? WHY DIE FOR OUTLAW HONOR?
WELL, I.. ALL RIGHT, YOU WIN!

YES, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING STRANGE...WE STILL CAN'T TRACE THE WARNING THAT REPORTED HIS WRECK! AND WHY DID HE SURRENDER SO MEEKLY?


THROUGH THE VOIDS OF THE SYSTEM, THE NEWS IS TOLD: "CAPT. SARACEN IS CAPTURED! FREE BOOTER CHIEFTAIN MAY REVEAL HIDEOUT OF HIS CREWS... LOOT MAY BE RECOVERED... STAY TUNED FOR FURTHER BULLETINS!"

THE SONA-CASTER SUMMONS GALE'S SCOUT PATROL...
SARACEN HAS YIELDED! HE'LL LEAD US TO HIS PIRATE'S NEST! READY ALL SHIPS!

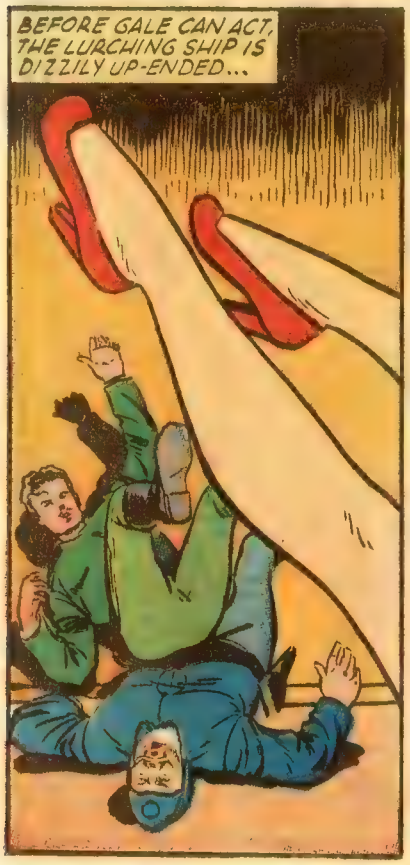
JANKO REPORTING FROM VANAM! THEY'VE SWALLOWED THE BAIT! PATROL NOW LEAVING. GET SET FOR THEM!
BUT FAR AWAY, ACROSS THE SPACE-LEAGUES, EAGER ENEMIES ALSO PREPARE..

GALE'S PILOT-SHIP STREAKS INTO THE HIGH-SPEED AIRLANE...
NO TRICKS, SARACEN, IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU!
MY CHARMING CAPTOR, EH? I HOPED WE'D MEET AGAIN! STEER EAST BY THE LUNADU CUSPS, AND FROM THERE...
THROUGH THE STELLAR TWILIGHT THE SQUADRON FOLLOWS GALE'S BLINKERS.
UNTIL, SUDDENLY, MURMURS OF SURPRISE FLASH FROM SHIP TO SHIP BY SPACE-OPHONE...
LOOK AHEAD! WHERE IS SHE LEADING US?
GALE SPEAKS SHARPLY...
BUT THIS... THE MOUNTAINS OF THE MISTS! THEY'RE UNCHARTED, TOO DANGEROUS!
DANGEROUS? OH, NO! SET YOUR ALTO-VIZOR AT 328° AND I'LL SHOW YOU THE PASSAGE!
"SKIRT THE UNDERCURRENTS," SAYS SARACEN BLANDLY, BUT GALE PEERS DOUBTFULLY AT THE SKYSCAPE HER GLOWING VIZO-PANEL REVEALS...
AND IN A CAVERN FASTNESS BENEATH THE SEA OF MISTS...
SIX CRUISERS, MAURDEZ, AT 4N² IN SECTOR G!
DE-ACCLIVATE THEM AS THEY CROSS THE K-BEAM! IMPULSORS AT FULL SWIRL! TOTAL POWER AND TOTAL VORTEX!

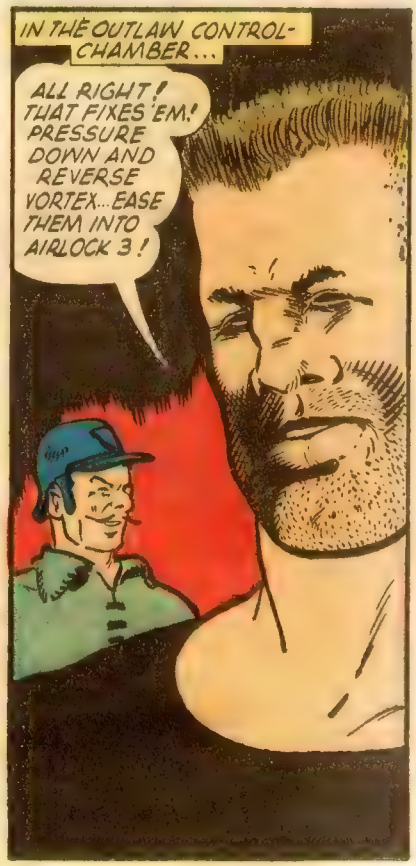
ABRUPTLY...
MY CONTROLS... FROZEN! I CAN'T ELEVATE! VICEROY, IT'S A TRAP FOR US!
GOOD WORK, MAURDEZ!

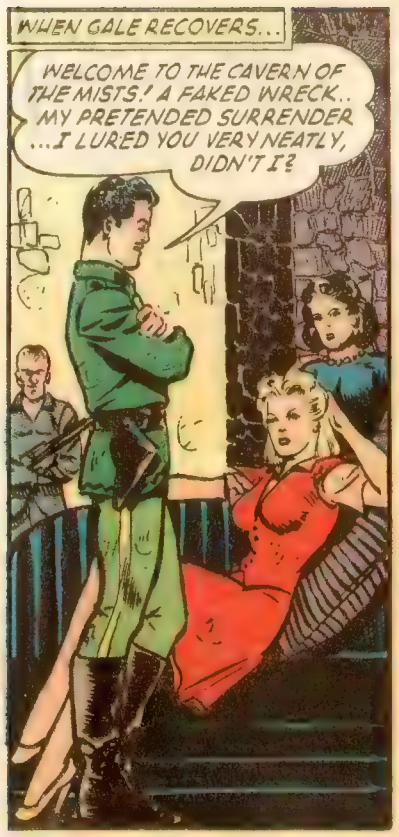
DYNAMIC FORCES, UNLEASHED FROM BELOW, STIR THE ATMOSPHERE TO FRENZY. THE SHIPS OF THE SQUADRON, LIKE STICKS IN A WHIRLPOOL, ARE SUCKED DOWN AND DOWN INTO THE AERY MAELSTROM...

THE VICEROY LUNGES AT THE PRISONER...
BUT SARACEN'S FIST IS FASTER THAN THE RAY-GUN!


BEFORE GALE CAN ACT, THE LURCHING SHIP IS DIZZILY UP-ENDED...

AND HER LAST CONSCIOUS VISION...
...IS A HAZY SWIRL OF SARACEN'S FACE, TRIUMPHANT


IN THE OUTLAW CONTROL-CHAMBER...
ALL RIGHT! THAT FIXES 'EM! PRESSURE DOWN AND REVERSE VORTEX... EASE THEM INTO AIRLOCK 3!


WHEN GALE RECOVERS...
WELCOME TO THE CAVERN OF THE MISTS! A FAKED WRECK.. MY PRETENDED SURRENDER ...I LURED YOU VERY NEATLY, DIDN'T I?

THE REASON? VERY SIMPLE, DEAR LADY! WE ARE LONELY MEN, HUNGRY FOR BEAUTY... AND ALL THE SPACEWAYS KNOW THAT THE GIRLS OF GALE ALLEN'S SQUADRON ARE THE FAIREST FLOWERS OF VENUS!

WITH GROWING TERROR GALE LISTENS AS HIS BRAZEN WORDS FLOW ON: "NO ESCAPE FOR YOU," HE BOASTS, "TONIGHT THE VICEROY WILL PERFORM THE MARRIAGES!"
SSSH! PROTESTS WON'T HELP US... OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO PLAY HIS OWN TRICKY GAME. WE'LL PRETEND SUBMISSION ...LEAD THEM ON!

AND SO, THAT EVENING, THE CAVERN BANQUET HALL ECHOES MOCK MERRIMENT... GALE'S GIRLS JOIN THE LAUGHTER AS THE OUTLAWS TOAST THEIR CONQUEST, BUT INWARDLY THEY WAIT GALE'S SIGNAL TO RISE AND ATTACK...

PRESENTLY..
BRING THE VICEROY! NOW WE CHOOSE OUR BRIDES! WHICH ONE WILL YOU HAVE, GOOD MAURDEZ?
FIRST CHOICE FOR ME? HA. I'LL TAKE THE LEADER!

NO... WAIT! I DIDN'T MEAN..
WHY WAIT, CAPTAIN? I HAVE NO OBJECTION TO MAURDEZ! I HAVE ALWAYS PREFERRED STRONG MEN TO SLY ONES!

SARACEN STRAIGHTENS... STIFFLY HE BOWS. THEN...

YOU'RE A LUCKY MAN, MAURDEZ! I'LL HURRY BACK WITH THE VICEROY!

GLASSES CLINKING, WILD SONGS ROARING, THE OTHER OUTLAWS CHOOSE THEIR MATES... GALE SITS CLOSE TO MAURDEZ, SMILING...

AND SUDDENLY SHE IS SPRINGING UP WITH THE RAY-GUN SNATCHED FROM HIS HOLSTER. NEXT INSTANT...

SMASH THEM! GRAB THEIR WEAPONS!

IN THE HURLY-BURLY THE GIRLS BREAK FREE...

UP THIS STAIRCASE ...QUICK! THERE'S A DOOR ABOVE...

BUT TOO LATE THEY FIND THAT THE DOOR IS SHOCK-PROOF! THEY TURN, CORNERED, CAPTURED WEAPONS HALTING THE OUTLAW PURSUIT...

AND A COOL VOICE SPEAKS TAUNTINGLY.

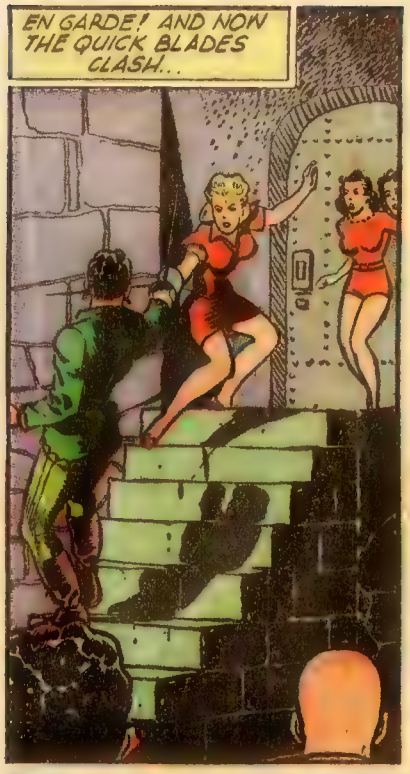
BACK MEN! CLOSE ALL CORRIDORS! I'LL FLOOD THE HALL WITH NOXANE!

HOLD, SARACEN! WE CANNOT FIGHT YOUR NOXANE GAS, BUT WE STILL CAN KILL OURSELVES!

AN INSTANT'S HUSH FILLS THE GREAT HALL. THEN GALE'S VOICE RINGS OUT IN CHALLENGE... "WILL YOU GAMBLE, SARACEN? NAME YOUR BEST SWORDSMAN AND I WILL MEET HIM! IF HE DEFEATS ME, YOUR OUTLAWS WILL GET WILLING BRIDES. IF I WIN, YOU SET US FREE! WHAT DO YOU SAY?"

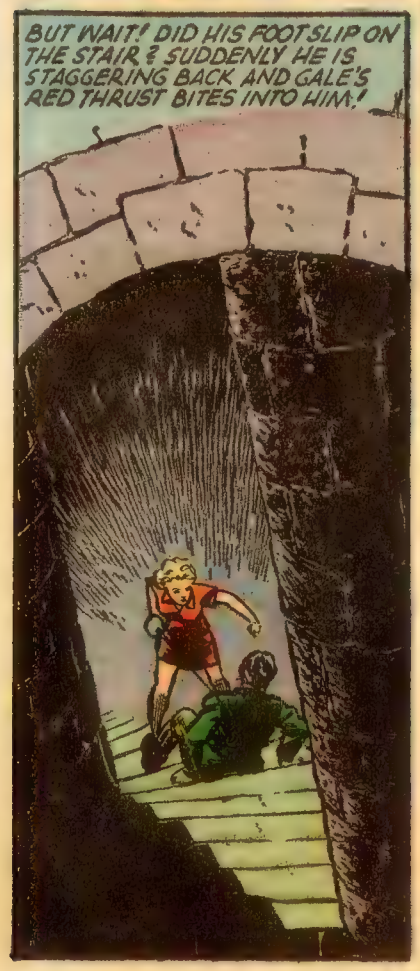
I MERELY SAY, DEAR LADY, THAT I TRUST YOU HAVE A BETTER CHOICE IN SWORDS THAN IN HUSBANDS!

SARACEN HIMSELF AGAINST HER! OH, SHE CAN'T HOPE TO WIN!


EN GARDE! AND NOW THE QUICK BLADES CLASH...

LUNGE AND PARRY... BUT AS THE EXCHANGES SHARPEN, GALE SEES THAT HER SKILL IS NO MATCH FOR THE SUPER-SKILL OF SARACEN!

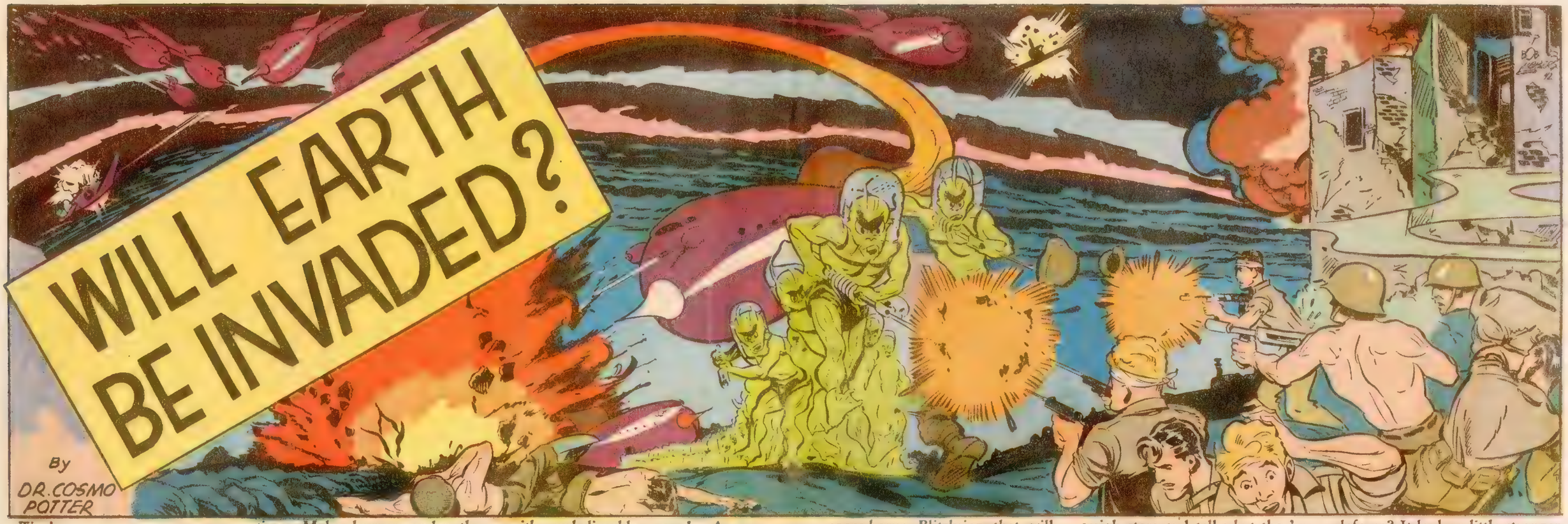
A LIGHTNING STROKE BEATS DOWN HER BLADE...
AND SARACEN PRESSES IN, SMILING QUEERLY...


BUT WAIT! DID HIS FOOT SLIP ON THE STAIR? SUDDENLY HE IS STAGGERING BACK AND GALE'S RED THRUST BITES INTO HIM!

AND SHORTLY...
TAKE YOUR SHIPS AND GO! ONE OF MY MEN WILL GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE PASSAGES!

YES, GALE ALLEN, GO! AND LUCK GO WITH YOU... UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN!

ENROUTE TO VANAM.
WHY DO YOU LOOK SO SERIOUS, GALE? YOU SHOULD BE SINGING WITH JOY AFTER SUCH A VICTORY!
VICTORY? THAT'S WHAT WORRIES ME, VICEROY! I WOULDN'T HAVE WON IF HE HADN'T SLIPPED...AND I STILL DON'T KNOW IF HE SLIPPED BY ACCIDENT OR ON PURPOSE!
GALE ALLEN AND HER GIRL SQUADRON... AND MAYBE CAPTAIN SARACEN?...RETURN IN THE NEXT PLANET COMICS!



War!

Hitler's mighty armies burst forth!

Stuka dive-bombers scream down. Heavy artillery shakes the ground. Tanks rumble forward.

All the world quails before the Blitzkrieg! Eighteen days and Holland and Belgium have fallen. The British Army is cut off and surrounded, its back to the sea. France's vaunted Maginot Line has been cut. And France's army—confidently spoken of as the greatest in Europe?

It is cut to ribbons, staggering back, brought to its knees! 1940, the Year of Terror!

War!

Millions, tens and hundreds of millions of men hurl themselves into combat. Whole continents become battlefields.

Magnetic land-mines controlled by radio roll toward fortifications. Moles burrow under the ground and suddenly erupt, spouting fire. Incredibly huge fleets howl deafeningly across the sky, raining death. Impregnable concrete forts creep relentlessly forward. Frightful atomic explosives rend and disintegrate everything inside a mile radius.

But—wait! What's this?

Germans fighting shoulder to shoulder with English! Chinese and Japs side by side! Russians, Italians, Americans, French—all fighting together!

When does all this take place?

2040, the Year of Dread!

But—who's fighting whom?

The men of Earth are fighting the men of Venus! Suddenly—without warning—a tremendous armada bursts out of the clouds that are the eternal smoke-screen of Venus. It hurtles toward Earth with unbelievable speed. Astronomers have hardly time enough to shout a warning over a world-wide hook-up—army staffs have even less time to mobilize the fighting men—

And they are upon us! The great ships dart down on our cities, wicked beams crumbling stone and steel to powder. The ships land and nightmare monsters tumble out, training their terrible rays right and left. The men of Earth vanish in puffs of fine dust that settle slowly—

Ours are the noisy, blustering guns.

Theirs is the terrible silence of efficiency.

Can this happen? Why not?

What do we know of other worlds? How can we be so sure cold, calculating eyes are not studying us—our roads, our cities, our wars—preparing a space-borne Blitzkrieg that will make Hitler's lightning war look like a Maypole party?

Of course, for us to launch an invasion of another world is both impossible and unlikely. In the first place, we don't want to.

In the second place, we can't. It's a terrible struggle for us to get as far as ten miles away from the Earth. We can't think of any protection from meteors, those bullets of space. Although work is being done on rockets, sending one to the Moon—less than a quarter-million miles away—is out of the question.

Maybe that's why we kid ourselves that the same problems prevent another world from invading ours.

But isn't it foolish to think that way? Science itself teaches us that anything can happen. Men can fly. Men can talk to each other across oceans. Men can weigh stars and tell what they're made of.

Just why can't the men of some other world have progressed further than we have? Why can't they have solved the problems which to us are impossible obstacles?

If we knew what their problems are, we'd know what our defenses are against their attacks. Their difficulties are our fortresses.

Has the Earth got a Maginot Line? Can it be overcome?

Let's take the Moon first—it's nearest. Our defense begins with the presumption that there is no life possible there, at least on the surface.

And right there is a crack in our armor. Maybe there is life *beneath* the surface of the Moon!

Then what's our next line of defense? It looks a little stronger than the first. It is the "defense in depth" of space—particularly meteors. The minute the Moon-man comes to the surface he is under bombardment, beside which what the Nazis did to Rotterdam in thirty minutes is nothing. Big and little stuff is spat-spatting into the Moon every second.

Then the Moon-man has to get under way. He not only still has to dodge meteors, but speed will increase the velocity of impact with them and render ducking them increasingly difficult.

The next line of defense is our gravity. It will be a surprise to him—the way he is suddenly sucked down to Earth much, much faster than he expected to arrive. The fourth line of defense will get into action about then, too. Having no atmosphere at home, it would be a tremendous

feat of imagination for him to foresee the effects of ours.

He may very well arrive flaming like an old-fashioned Christmas pudding.

But let's let him come through safely. Let's let him step out and meet the fifth, sixth and seventh lines of defense—before he encounters the fighting man of Earth.

He steps out—and crumples in a heap! He weighs six times what he weighed at home. His bones may snap with the strain. Certainly his internal organs will go on strike.

He manages to overcome this—and what happens? A mild breeze springs up, the kind we hold on to our hats for. But he—the Moon-man—is blown all over the place, with his equipment. Having no atmosphere at home, he has no wind. Don't laugh! A stiff breeze may wreck the first Lunar expedition to Earth.

All right, he ties everything down. And the bacteria start swarming into his body. He may never know what hits him as he succumbs to a raging fever. We might yet be pinning medals on the tubercle bacillus!

By this time the Moon-men would seem to be a set-up for a squad of Civil War veterans armed with brass knuckles.

But let's not be too sure. Maybe the Moon-men would be up against it, but others might not find it so tough.

Venus at times comes within twenty-five million miles of us. It has atmosphere, and life is considerably more possible there. Space, with its charging meteors, is perhaps our *only* Maginot Line for Venus. Gravity is about the same. And space is no tougher a problem for the Venusians than it is for the Moon-men.

Some of the defense lines come back into operation for the Martians. They have much less atmosphere and less than half our gravity. Life, as we know it, would be terribly difficult to sustain there. But, even so, the natural defense lines are weak.

A new defense line is ready for the Mercurians — temperature. They would either freeze with a snap or burn to a crisp, depending on which face of Mercury they came from. Mercury, like our Moon, keeps one face toward the body it rotates about, the Sun. One side therefore runs up to about 770 degrees Fahrenheit and the other is near absolute zero. Mercury is hell on ice. Also, it has no atmosphere.

Temperature defends us also against the outer giants of Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune, Uranus, and Pluto. To them we live in a furnace.

Most of them have atmospheres—and what atmospheres! Ammonia and marsh gases. This means that if they have life that can breathe that stuff, it can't breathe ours. Our fresh air is deadly poison.

The men from Jupiter would have trouble with our gravity. Our defense line there is not so much, but it would be good for our morale—and not so good for the Jovians—to see them leaping around like silly fools. You see, they'd weigh two and a half times more at home. Here, they'd be ballet dancers!

There is one general line of defense that perhaps only the Venusians could ignore. Atmospheric pressure. It would utterly crush the Moon-man, the Mercurian and the Martian. On the other hand it would tend to explode the Jovian, the Saturnian, the Uranian, and the Neptunian. They carry a hundred thousand times that pressure at home. Let them just step out on Earth and they'd go bang!

But we needn't be too sure about any of our defense lines, natural or military. We just can't see now how they can be penetrated. That doesn't mean they can't.

About the only thing it does mean is that, for the moment, we've very sure of our security from attack from space.

Why should we be?

What is our final line of defense?

It is ourselves!

How well could we fight off the invaders that come flaming down out of the sky?

The answer to that will have to wait until they come. But it seems safe to say that at best it will be no easy victory for us.

For, if some alien race is able to overcome the successive lines of our natural defenses, that race has power and science enough to make mincemeat of us.

The power that would loft them through the void would be greater than any we could generate.

The science and engineering skill that enables them to understand and undermine our natural defenses puts our own ingenuity to shame.

It looks like an easy victory for the invaders!

But, again, let's not be too sure.

We have our Edisons and our Einsteins. We will have them again.

It wants but some fresh secret to be discovered.

Perhaps the best and last line of defense is—

The Mind of Man!

Another amazing FUTURE-FACT science feature will appear in the next issue of PLANET COMICS

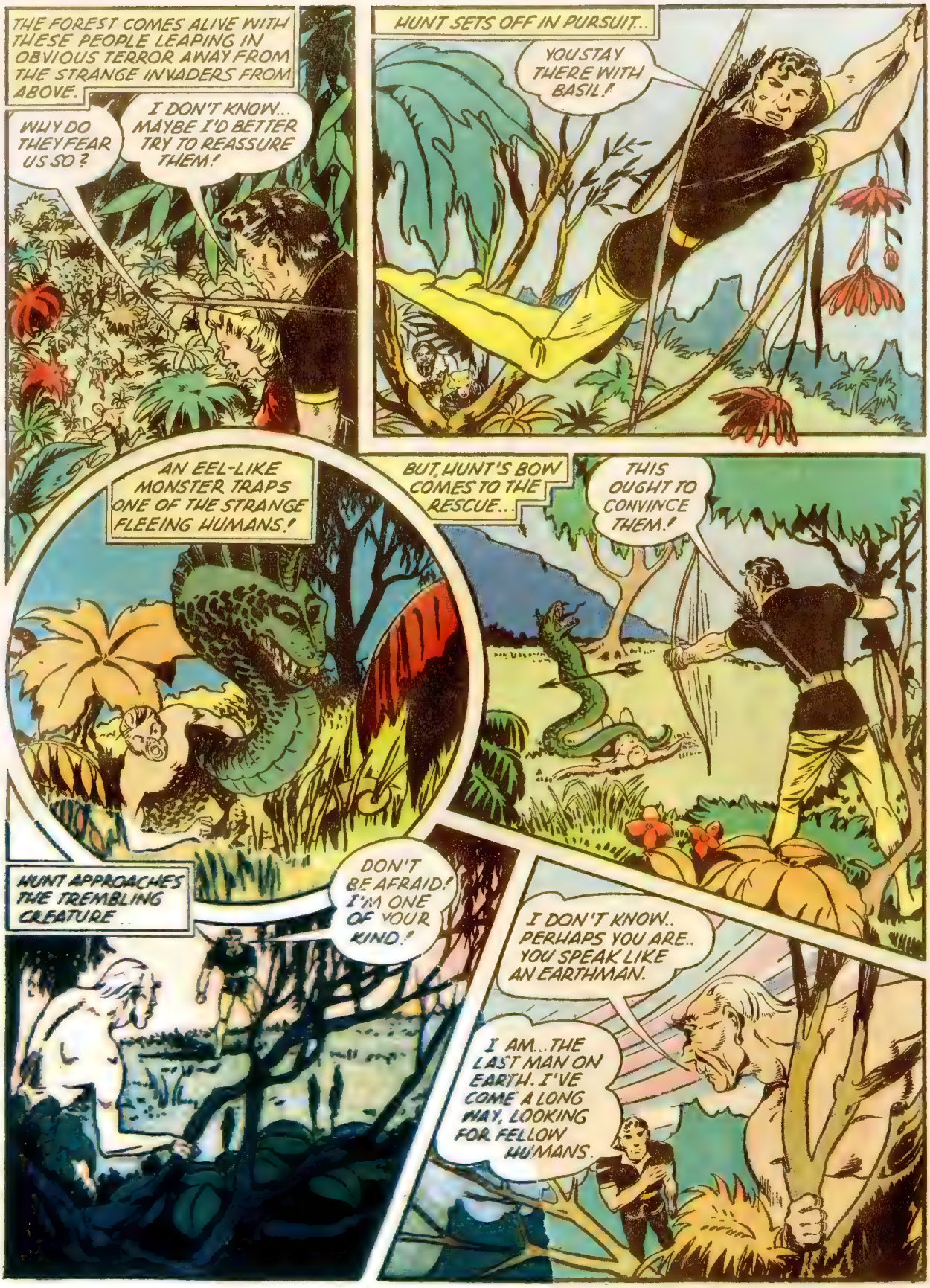
LOST WORLD

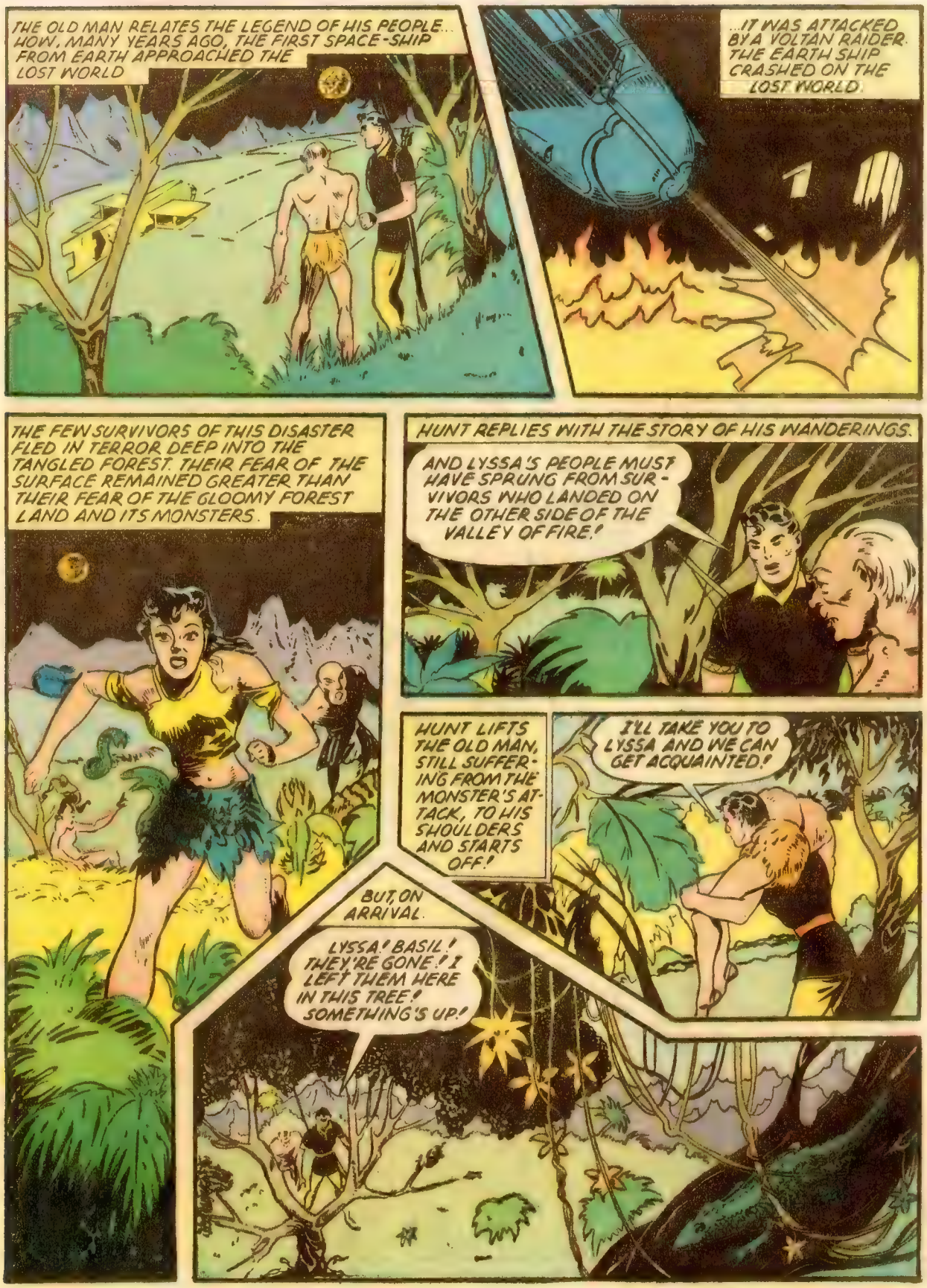
BY
HERRICK

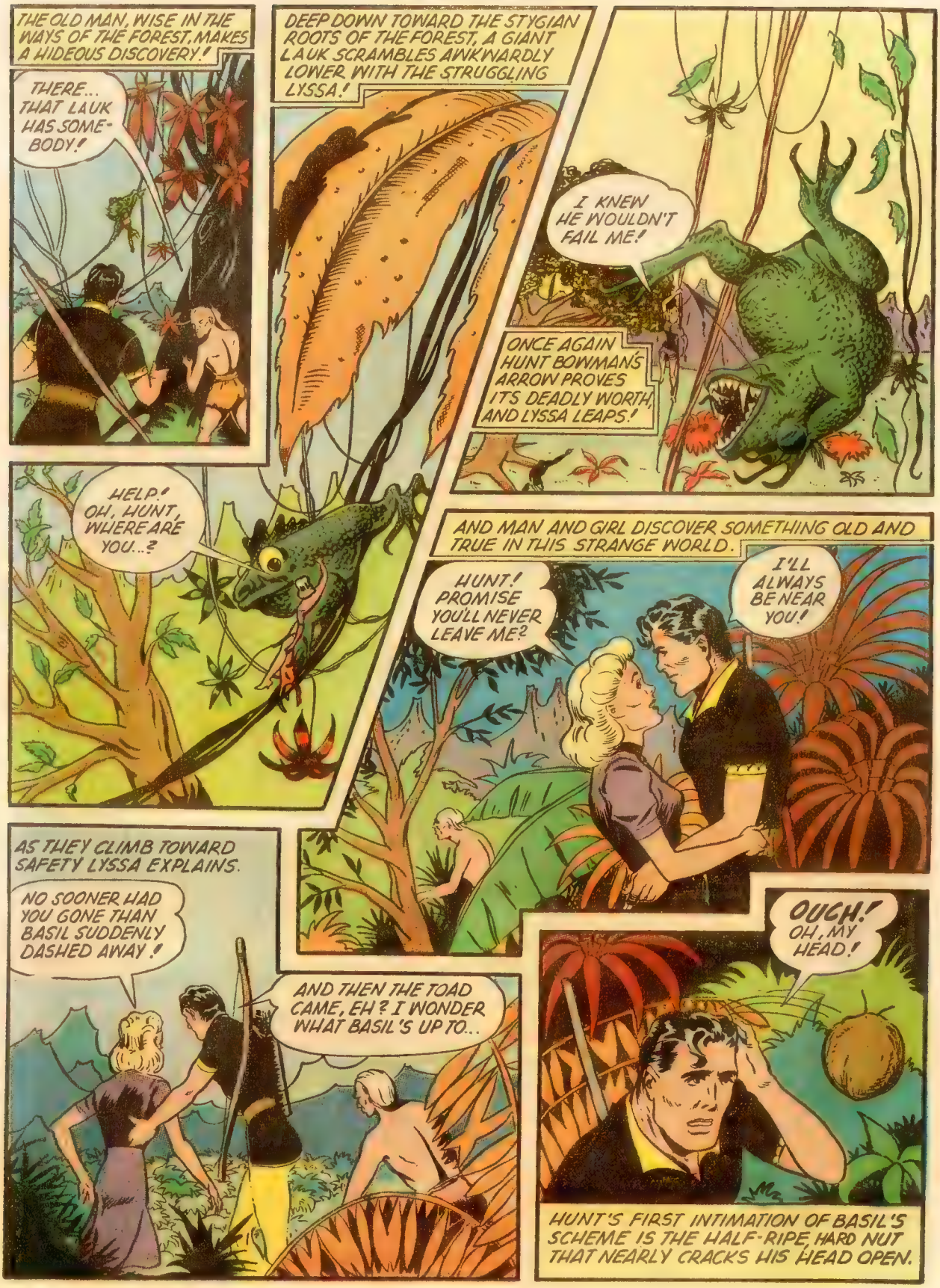
HURLED BY SAVAGE, TRAGIC DESTINY ACROSS THE FATHOMLESS DEPTHS OF SPACE, HUNT. BOWMAN, THE LAST HUMAN ON EARTH, STRUGGLES DESPERATELY TO BRING FROM ONE LOST WORLD TO ANOTHER THE FELLOW BEINGS FOR WHOM HE HAS BEEN SO LONELY.
QUEEN LYSSA, ABOUT TO CROSS THE VALLEY OF FIRE IN THE VOLTA SPACE SHIP WITH HUNT BOWMAN, BIDS FAREWELL TO HER PEOPLE!
WE WILL RETURN, MY LOYAL ONES...AND MAYHAP WE SHALL HAVE FOUND YOU A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE!
BASIL, STILL SEETHING WITH JEALOUSY AT HUNT BOWMAN FOR HAVING DISPLACED HIM IN LYSSA'S AFFECTIONS, PLEADS TO BE ALLOWED TO ACCOMPANY THEM.
I AM YOUR FAITHFUL SUBJECT!
I SAY LET'S GIVE HIM ANOTHER CHANCE!

AT LAST ALL IS READY AND THE SHIP SOARS INTO THE LOST WORLD'S THIN COLD AIR, HEADING FOR THE FIERY VALLEY AND THE MYSTERIOUS RACE ON ITS OTHER SIDE.
AFTER ALL, IT'S ONLY RUMORED THAT THERE ARE ANY PEOPLE OVER THERE!
UNACCUSTOMED TO FLYING, THEY TRY TO CROSS THE SULPHUROUS FLAMES AT TOO LOW AN ALTITUDE. SUDDENLY THE STURDY SHIP IS TOSSED AND TUMBLED BY TREACHEROUS AIR CURRENTS CAUSED BY THE INTENSE HEAT!
THAT TERRIBLE.. HEAT! I...CAN'T..BEAR...IT
WE'LL CRASH IF SOMEBODY DOESN'T DO SOMETHING!
HUNT SEIZES THE CONTROLS AND SENDS THE SHIP HURTLING SPACEWARD...JUST IN TIME!
FAR OUT INTO THE SAFETY OF SPACE, HUNT LEVELS OFF AND FOR THE FIRST TIME THE THREE ADVENTURERS STARE DOWN AT THE OTHER PART OF THE LOST WORLD!
WHY, IT'S ALL OVERGROWN—NOTHING BUT TREES, VINES AND FOLIAGE EVERYWHERE!
THERE'S NO PLACE FOR US TO LAND!

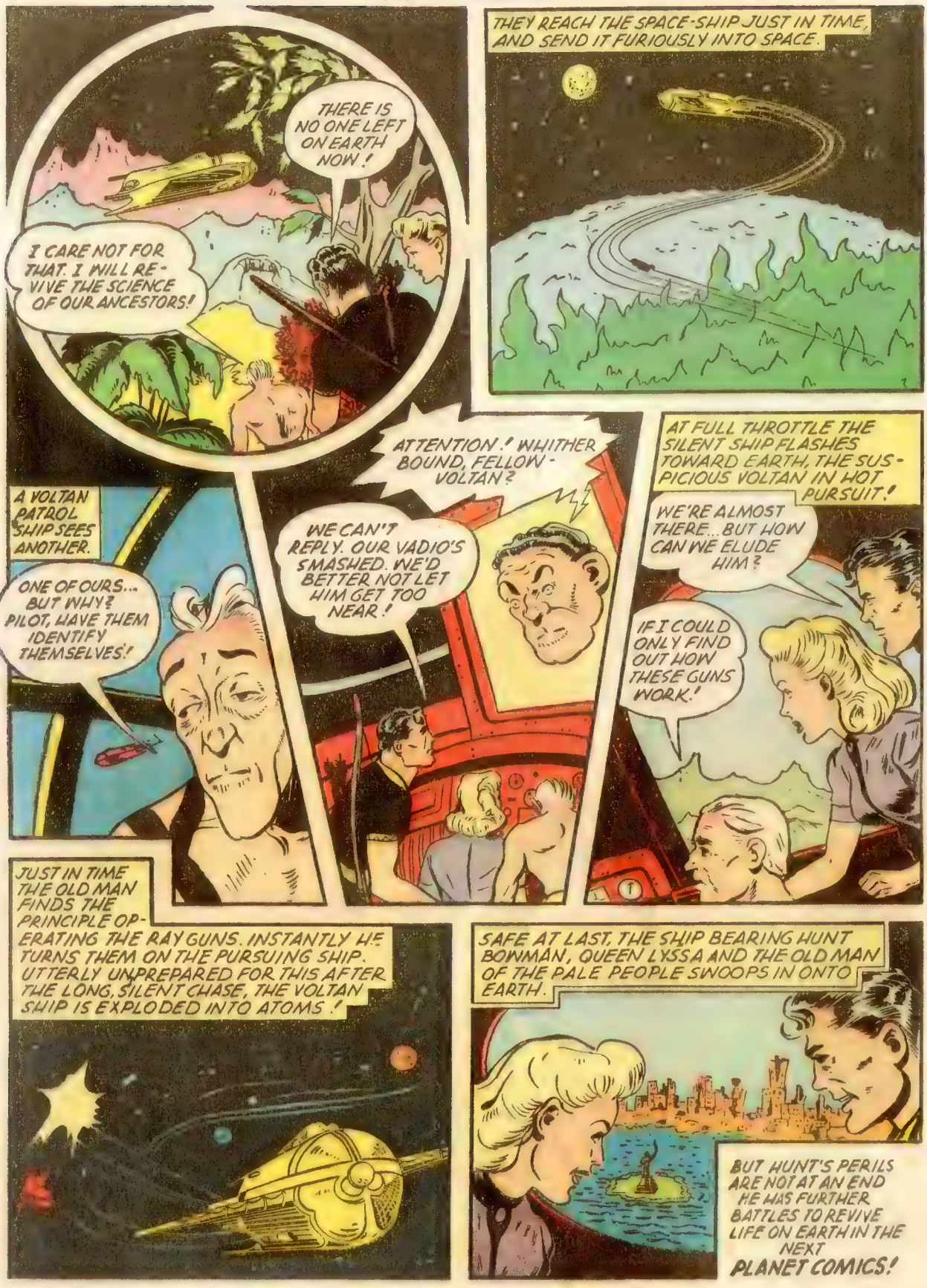
THERE IS NOTHING TO DO BUT LAND THE SHIP AS BEST THEY CAN IT COMES TO REST ON A MATTRESS OF FOLIAGE
THEY OPEN A PORT AND GAZE THROUGH TROPICAL MISTS AT THE LUSH VEGETATION.
TREES, VINES, LEAVES.. NOTHING ELSE!
WHY YOU CAN'T EVEN SEE THE GROUND!
SUDDENLY A PART OF THE FOREST MOVES!
HEY! THAT'S NO VINE!
LOOK OUT! IT'S COMING FOR US!
QUICKLY, HUNT FITS AN ARROW TO HIS BOW.. THE SHAFT SPEEDS TRUE!
WE'LL HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR THOSE THINGS!
I FEEL SAFE WITH YOU, HUNT!
WE SHOULDN'T HAVE COME!
DETERMINED TO INVESTIGATE, HUNT AND LYSSA VENTURE FORTH. BASIL FOLLOWS RELUCTANTLY, A PREY TO HIS PRIMITIVE FEARS.
AS THEY ADVANCE DOWN INTO THE FOREST A STARTLED CREATURE FLEES
IT'S A HUMAN BEING!
I'LL GET HIM FIRST!


THE FOREST COMES ALIVE WITH THESE PEOPLE LEAPING IN OBVIOUS TERROR AWAY FROM THE STRANGE INVADERS FROM ABOVE.
WHY DO THEY FEAR US SO?
I DON'T KNOW... MAYBE I'D BETTER TRY TO REASSURE THEM!
HUNT SETS OFF IN PURSUIT..
YOU STAY THERE WITH BASIL!
AN EEL-LIKE MONSTER TRAPS ONE OF THE STRANGE FLEEING HUMANS!
BUT, HUNT'S BOW COMES TO THE RESCUE..
THIS OUGHT TO CONVINCE THEM!
HUNT APPROACHES THE TREMBLING CREATURE..
DON'T BE AFRAID! I'M ONE OF YOUR KIND!
I DON'T KNOW.. PERHAPS YOU ARE.. YOU SPEAK LIKE AN EARTHMAN.
I AM...THE LAST MAN ON EARTH. I'VE COME A LONG WAY, LOOKING FOR FELLOW HUMANS.


THE OLD MAN RELATES THE LEGEND OF HIS PEOPLE... HOW, MANY YEARS AGO, THE FIRST SPACE-SHIP FROM EARTH APPROACHED THE LOST WORLD
...IT WAS ATTACKED BY A VOLTAN RAIDER. THE EARTH SHIP CRASHED ON THE LOST WORLD.
THE FEW SURVIVORS OF THIS DISASTER FLED IN TERROR DEEP INTO THE TANGLED FOREST. THEIR FEAR OF THE SURFACE REMAINED GREATER THAN THEIR FEAR OF THE GLOOMY FOREST LAND AND ITS MONSTERS.
HUNT REPLIES WITH THE STORY OF HIS WANDERINGS.
AND LYSSA'S PEOPLE MUST HAVE SPRUNG FROM SURVIVORS WHO LANDED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE VALLEY OF FIRE!
HUNT LIFTS THE OLD MAN, STILL SUFFERING FROM THE MONSTER'S ATTACK, TO HIS SHOULDERS AND STARTS OFF!
I'LL TAKE YOU TO LYSSA AND WE CAN GET ACQUAINTED!
BUT, ON ARRIVAL.
LYSSA! BASIL! THEY'RE GONE! I LEFT THEM HERE IN THIS TREE! SOMETHING'S UP!


THE OLD MAN, WISE IN THE WAYS OF THE FOREST, MAKES A HIDEOUS DISCOVERY!
THERE... THAT LAUK HAS SOMEBODY!
DEEP DOWN TOWARD THE STYGIAN ROOTS OF THE FOREST, A GIANT LAUK SCRAMBLES AWKWARDLY LOWER WITH THE STRUGGLING LYSSA!
I KNEW HE WOULDN'T FAIL ME!
ONCE AGAIN HUNT BOWMAN'S ARROW PROVES ITS DEADLY WORTH, AND LYSSA LEAPS!
HELP! OH, HUNT, WHERE ARE YOU...?
AND MAN AND GIRL DISCOVER SOMETHING OLD AND TRUE IN THIS STRANGE WORLD.
HUNT! PROMISE YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE ME?
I'LL ALWAYS BE NEAR YOU!
AS THEY CLIMB TOWARD SAFETY LYSSA EXPLAINS.
NO SOONER HAD YOU GONE THAN BASIL SUDDENLY DASHED AWAY!
AND THEN THE TOAD CAME, EH? I WONDER WHAT BASIL'S UP TO...
OUCH! OH, MY HEAD!
HUNT'S FIRST INTIMATION OF BASIL'S SCHEME IS THE HALF-RIPE HARD NUT THAT NEARLY CRACKS HIS HEAD OPEN.

CREEPING UP THROUGH THE FOREST COME THE PALE PEOPLE. AND THERE IS ANOTHER EXPRESSION ON THEIR FACES IN PLACE OF FEAR.
WHY DO YOU ATTACK THIS MAN? DON'T YOU REALIZE HE SAVED ME FROM A GAKKIL? HE AND HIS FRIENDS HAVE COME TO HELP US!
BASIL REVEALS HIMSELF AS THE INSTIGATOR OF THE ANGRY MOB.
THAT'S NOT SO! HE HAS COME TO ENSLAVE YOU ALL! LISTEN TO ME..I KNOW!
HUNT, SHAKING OFF THE EFFECT OF THE BLOW, STEPS FORWARD TO MAKE A FERVENT APPEAL...
AS ONE HUMAN BEING TO OTHER HUMAN BEINGS, I SWEAR TO YOU THAT I HAVE ONLY COME TO HELP. YOU ALL CAME FROM THE EARTH...WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO GO BACK THERE?
BUT TOO MANY FEAR-RIDDEN GENERATIONS LIE BEHIND THIS PEOPLE FOR THEM TO LISTEN TO REASON..
KILL THEM!
DRIVE THEM OUT!
WHAT'S A HUMAN BEING?
THERE'S NOTHING FOR US TO DO BUT GET OUT OF HERE!
LET ME COME WITH YOU! MY PEOPLE WERE SCIENTISTS AND I WANT TO SEE EARTH AGAIN!

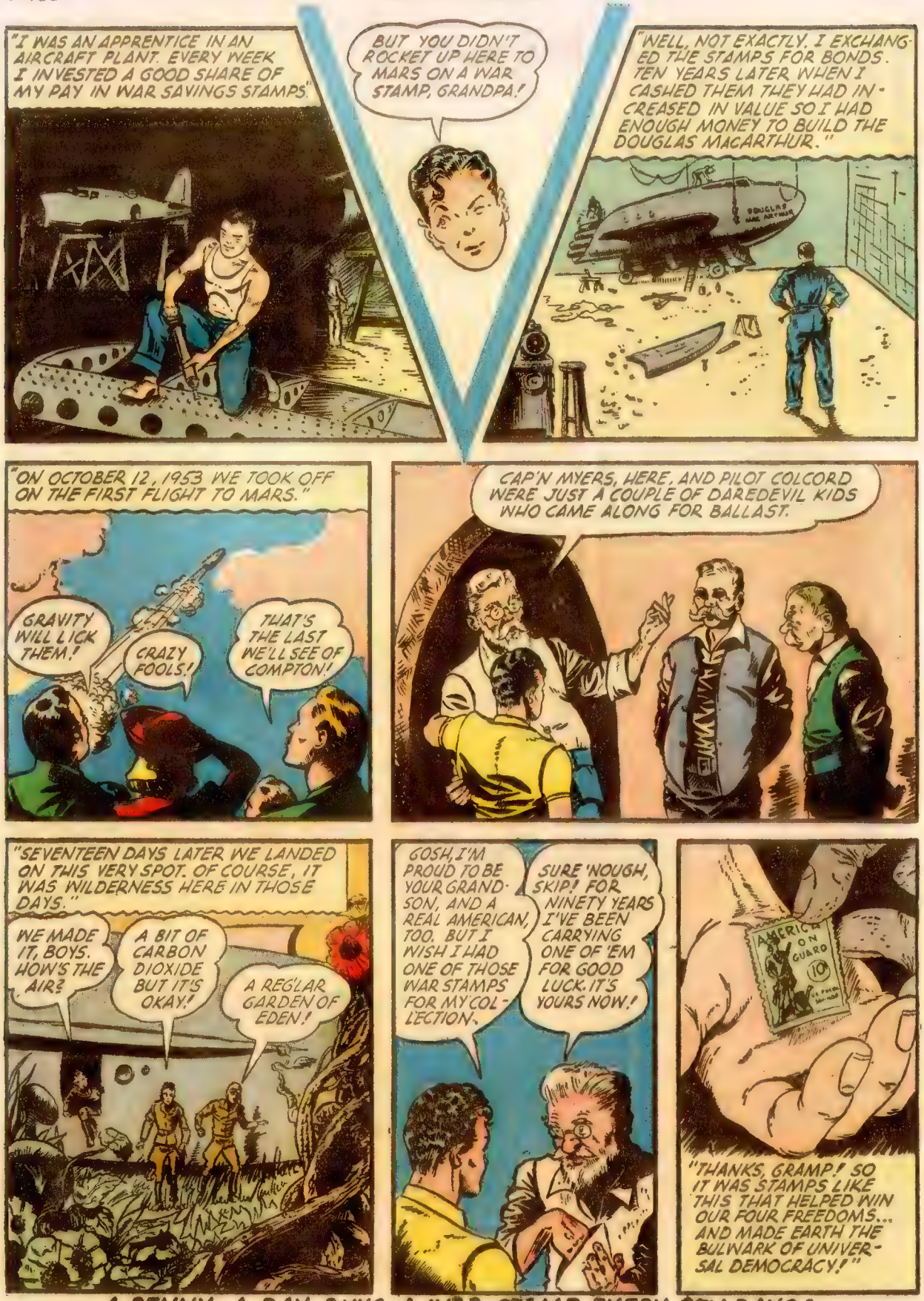

THERE IS NO ONE LEFT ON EARTH NOW!
I CARE NOT FOR THAT. I WILL REVIVE THE SCIENCE OF OUR ANCESTORS!
THEY REACH THE SPACE-SHIP JUST IN TIME, AND SEND IT FURIOUSLY INTO SPACE.
A VOLTAN PATROL SHIP SEES ANOTHER.
ONE OF OURS... BUT WHY? PILOT, HAVE THEM IDENTIFY THEMSELVES!
ATTENTION! WHITHER BOUND, FELLOW-VOLTAN?
WE CAN'T REPLY. OUR VADIO'S SMASHED. WE'D BETTER NOT LET HIM GET TOO NEAR!
AT FULL THROTTLE THE SILENT SHIP FLASHES TOWARD EARTH, THE SUSPICIOUS VOLTAN IN HOT PURSUIT!
WE'RE ALMOST THERE... BUT HOW CAN WE ELUDE HIM?
IF I COULD ONLY FIND OUT HOW THESE GUNS WORK!
JUST IN TIME THE OLD MAN FINDS THE PRINCIPLE OPERATING THE RAY GUNS. INSTANTLY HE TURNS THEM ON THE PURSUING SHIP. UTTERLY UNPREPARED FOR THIS AFTER THE LONG, SILENT CHASE, THE VOLTAN SHIP IS EXPLODED INTO ATOMS!
SAFE AT LAST, THE SHIP BEARING HUNT BOWMAN, QUEEN LYSSA AND THE OLD MAN OF THE PALE PEOPLE SWOOPS IN ONTO EARTH.
BUT HUNT'S PERILS ARE NOT AT AN END HE HAS FURTHER BATTLES TO REVIVE LIFE ON EARTH IN THE NEXT PLANET COMICS!

PLANET COMICS GOES ON SALE THE 10th

100 Years After

by Derek West

DECEMBER 7, 2041, AT THE SPACE PORT IN NEW CHICAGO, MARS, SKIP COMPTON FINDS HIS GRAN'DAD SPINNING YARNS WITH TWO OLD PILOTS.
HEY, GRAMP! HOW ABOUT A CELEBRATION?
SHIVER MY HULL PLATES! WE CLEAN FORGOT IT!
WHAT'S YOU AND THE YOUNG 'UN TALKIN' ABOUT, JOHN?.
MEAN TO TELL ME YOU'RE SO ROCKET HEAVY YUH DON'T KNOW? TODAY'S THE CENTENARY OF PEARL HARBOR.
AW, C'MON, GRAMP! TELL ME ABOUT IT. THE HISTORY BOOKS GOT ONLY A PARAGRAPH!
SURE THING! 'COURSE YOU UNDERSTAND I WASN'T AT HAWAII WHEN THE MONKEY MEN ATTACKED. I WAS JUST A KID LIKE YOU, BACK IN OLD CHICAGO!
BUT LONG AS I LIVE I'LL NEVER FORGET THE ELECTRIFYING NEWS THAT REACHED US THAT SUNDAY AFTERNOON ON THE RADIO!
IN A CLEAR, VIBRANT VOICE THE ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTEEN YEAR OLD SPACE-FARER RELATES A VIVID TALE OF HOW AMERICAN HEROISM THWARTED THE TREACHEROUS JAP ASSAULT ON PEARL HARBOR.
COMET CAKES! THAT SURE WAS SOME BATTLE, GRAMP! BET YOU WISHED YOU'D BEEN OLD ENOUGH TO HAVE FLOWN ONE OF THOSE FUNNY OLD PURSUIT SHIPS!
THAT'S RIGHT, SKIPPER. BUT I DID THE BEST A BOY COULD DO... AND THAT'S HOW I CAME TO MAKE THE FIRST VOYAGE FROM EARTH TO MARS!


"I WAS AN APPRENTICE IN AN AIRCRAFT PLANT. EVERY WEEK I INVESTED A GOOD SHARE OF MY PAY IN WAR SAVINGS STAMPS."
BUT YOU DIDN'T ROCKET UP HERE TO MARS ON A WAR STAMP, GRANDPA!
"WELL, NOT EXACTLY. I EXCHANGED THE STAMPS FOR BONDS. TEN YEARS LATER WHEN I CASHED THEM THEY HAD INCREASED IN VALUE SO I HAD ENOUGH MONEY TO BUILD THE DOUGLAS MacARTHUR."
"ON OCTOBER 12, 1953 WE TOOK OFF ON THE FIRST FLIGHT TO MARS."
GRAVITY WILL LICK THEM!
CRAZY FOOLS!
THAT'S THE LAST WE'LL SEE OF COMPTON!
CAP'N MYERS, HERE, AND PILOT COLCORD WERE JUST A COUPLE OF DAREDEVIL KIDS WHO CAME ALONG FOR BALLAST.
"SEVENTEEN DAYS LATER WE LANDED ON THIS VERY SPOT. OF COURSE, IT WAS WILDERNESS HERE IN THOSE DAYS."
WE MADE IT, BOYS. HOW'S THE AIR?
A BIT OF CARBON DIOXIDE BUT IT'S OKAY!
A REG'LAR GARDEN OF EDEN!
GOSH, I'M PROUD TO BE YOUR GRANDSON, AND A REAL AMERICAN, TOO. BUT I WISH I HAD ONE OF THOSE WAR STAMPS FOR MY COLLECTION.
SURE 'NOUGH, SKIP! FOR NINETY YEARS I'VE BEEN CARRYING ONE OF 'EM FOR GOOD LUCK. IT'S YOURS NOW!
AMERICA ON GUARD
10¢
"THANKS, GRAMP! SO IT WAS STAMPS LIKE THIS THAT HELPED WIN OUR FOUR FREEDOMS... AND MADE EARTH THE BULWARK OF UNIVERSAL DEMOCRACY!"

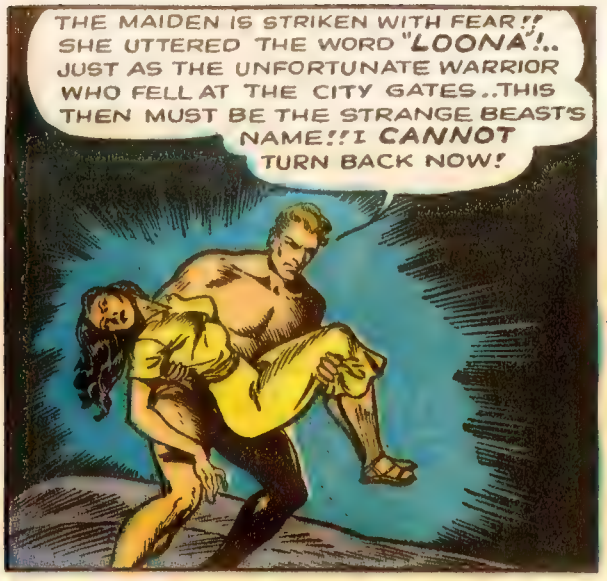
A PENNY A DAY BUYS A WAR STAMP EVERY TEN DAYS!

AURO LORD of JUPITER

By Dick Charles

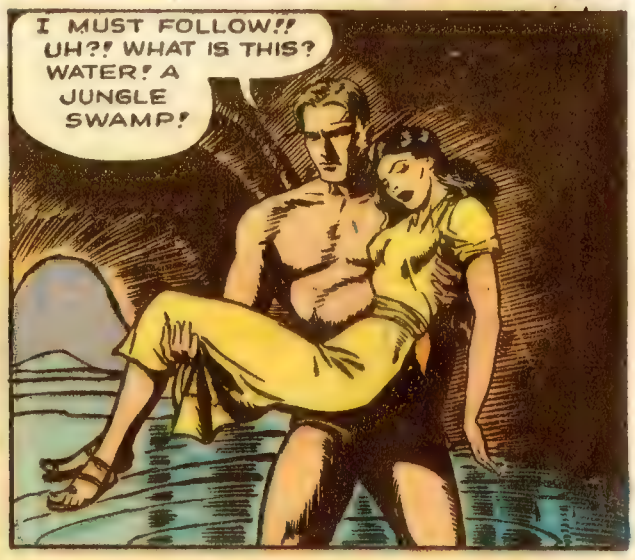
ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF A JUPITERIAN CITY, A DYING MAN FEEBLY CRAWLS TOWARD THE GATE AS AURO AND THE KING RACE TO HELP HIM.
IT...IS..T-TOO LATE! L-L-LOONA! THE SWAMP.. AGHH!
HE IS DEAD! AH, AURO..HE IS ONE OF MANY OF MY PEOPLE WHO HAVE QUIETLY DISAPPEARED AND RETURNED THUS. MY POLICE FORCE IS HELPLESS! I AM AT MY WITS END AND KNOW NOT WHAT TO DO. I APPEAL TO YOU FOR HELP!
I WILL DO ALL I CAN!

THE MIGHTY LORD OF JUPITER SETS OUT TO DISCOVER THE MYSTERIOUS DEATHS OF THE KING'S SUBJECTS.. HE SWINGS THROUGH THE TREES..
HELP!
A WOMAN'S SCREAM OF TERROR! AURO WILL SOON FIND ITS SOURCE!
IN A NEARBY ROCK CRATER..
SO?! THIS EVIL GIANT LIZARD WOULD CLAIM THE LOVELY MAIDEN FOR HIS VICTIM!!
AURO SHALL LOOSE YOUR FOUL FANGS, UGLY ONE.. RUN, FAIR MAIDEN! I SHALL DEAL WITH THIS DEVIL!
WHA'..?! THE BEAST HAS WINGS! IT FLIES!
SOON YOU SHALL FALL TO EARTH.. DEAD!
AGAIN AND AGAIN AURO'S SHARP BLADE DIGS INTO THE LIZARD.. MORTALLY WOUNDED, THE FLYING MONSTER WRITHES CONVULSIVELY...
AND PERISHES IN MID-AIR.. AURO QUICKLY SPREADS THE WINGS OF THE LIZARD AND FLOATS GENTLY TOWARD THE GROUND..
THIS MONSTROSITY ACTS LIKE A GLIDER FOR ME!
IN A FEW MINUTES, HE LANDS UNHARMED...
AURO HAS CONQUERED ONCE MORE! BUT THE GIRL.. I MUST GO TO HER..
SHE WOULD SPEAK.. HER LIPS MOVE!
L-LOONA.. IT TRIED TO K- KILL ME.. B- BLOOD.. OHH..


THE MAIDEN IS STRIKEN WITH FEAR!! SHE UTTERED THE WORD "LOONA"!.. JUST AS THE UNFORTUNATE WARRIOR WHO FELL AT THE CITY GATES..THIS THEN MUST BE THE STRANGE BEAST'S NAME!! I CANNOT TURN BACK NOW!

SUDDENLY.. A FAMILLIAR DARK SHAPE LOOMS IN THE SKY ABOVE . .
ANOTHER FLYING MONSTER COMES!

A GREAT FLAPPING OF WINGS...AND THE LIZARD LANDS NEAR A CANYON WALL..
THERE IS AN OPENING IN THE ROCK! THE LOONA CRAWLS IN!


I MUST FOLLOW!! UH?! WHAT IS THIS? WATER! A JUNGLE SWAMP!

THE GIRL WILL BE SAFE HERE ON THIS LEDGE! I CANNOT CARRY HER INTO UNKNOWN DANGER!

DEEPER INTO THE MUSTY, CAVE-LIKE FISSURE, GOES AURO...WHEN SUDDENLY, FROM THE SHADOWS ... DROOLING, SHARP-TOOTHED JAWS BEND TOWARD THE MIGHTY LORD OF JUPITER . . . .

YOUR LEGS WILL MOVE NO MORE TOWARD A VICTIM'S DEATH, MISERABLE ONE!
BLOOD SPLASHES GEYSER-LIKE FROM THE WOUNDED MONSTER, BLINDING THE OTHER LOONA.
AHH..THOSE EVIL EYES SEE NO MORE.. NOW, BEAST OF BEASTS, AURO'S BLADE SHALL END YOUR CURSED LIFE!
BUT BEFORE THE SWORD CAN STRIKE A DEATH BLOW, WEIRD, GREEN-FACED, LITTLE MEN LEAP UPON HIM. . . .
NO! NO! NOT KILL LOONA!
UH.. AND WHAT STRANGE INSECTS CAN THESE BE?
WE SWAMP-MEN! YOU OUR PRISONER!
HIS MIGHTY STRENGTH USELESS BEFORE THE HORDES OF SMALL ATTACKERS, AURO IS DRAGGED BEFORE BASTO, HIDEOUS LEADER OF THE SWAMPMEN. . .
SO, AURO, YOU COME TO SEARCH FOR THE LOST MEN OF JUPITER!
FOOL! YOUR SEARCH SHALL END WITH YOUR DEATH! BUT FIRST I SHALL TELL YOU HOW MY LOONAS, TRAINED FROM THE SWAMP, CAPTURE YOUR PEOPLE AND BRING THEM HERE SO THAT WE MAY DRINK THEIR BLOOD AND GROW STRONG!
HERE ON THIS ALTAR... ONE OF YOUR BROTHERS LIES DEAD!
SEE HOW HIS BLOOD DRIPS.. DRIPS SLOWLY! HA! HA! WHEN HIS VEINS ARE EMPTY, WE WILL TOSS HIS USELESS BODY TO THE LOONAS!

THROWN INTO A DANK DUNGEON, AURO FINDS THE GIRL HE HAD RESCUED FROM THE LOONA'S JAWS.
MY NAME IS MEENA..THE SWAMPMEN KILLED MY FATHER! I ESCAPED AND WAS GOING BACK TO WARN MY PEOPLE WHEN THE LOONA CAUGHT ME! THE SWAMPMEN FOUND ME ON THE LEDGE WHERE YOU LEFT ME AND BROUGHT ME HERE!
SUDDENLY, THE BARRED PRISON DOOR CREAKS OPEN. . . .
YOU WILL NOT ESCAPE AGAIN! YOU WILL STAY HERE TO REIGN AS MY QUEEN, AND AURO WILL MEET THE GIANT RATNA IN THE ARENA WITHOUT WEAPONS! IF HE CONQUERS, HE SHALL GO FREE!
BEFORE THE KINGDOM OF SWAMPLAND, THE GALLANT LORD OF JUPITER FACES THE VICIOUS MONSTER..
THE BEAST CHARGES! I MUST NOT FAIL!
NOW, CRUEL DEMON.. IT IS YOUR LIFE OR MINE!
AS THE DEADLY RATNA HOLDS AURO BENEATH HIS PONDEROUS CLAWS..
(GASP..) HIS TONGUE! I MUST CATCH IT..IT IS MY ONLY CHANCE!
AHH..IT IS DONE..THE EVIL ONE CHOKES... HIS EYES GROW BIGGER..BIGGER!
THE RATNA DEAD, AURO SEIZES A SWAMPMAN'S SPEAR.
AHRR..
MEENA, COME!
BUT THE VICIOUS BASTO SWINGS THE GIRL OVER HIS SHOULDER, AND..
HA! HA! YOU WILL COME, MEENA... WITH BASTO!
HELP, AURO.. SAVE ME!
COWARDLY DEVIL! YOU CANNOT ESCAPE AURO'S WRATH!

I WILL CUT OUT YOUR HEART, MEDDLING FOOL!
AURO WILL LIVE, BASTO...
AHGRRR..
YOU WILL DIE!
FASTER, MEENA...THE SWAMPMEN ARE CLOSE ON OUR HEELS!
GASPING FOR BREATH, AURO AND MEENA REACH THE OPENING IN THE CANYON WALL..
THIS BOULDER WILL HOLD OFF THE EVIL SWAMP-MEN!
QUICKLY, AURO! THEY COME CLOSER!
BUT AS THE GREAT ROCK SLIPS INTO THE FISSURE, BASTO'S MEN PREPARE TO BLAST THE ROCK BLOCKING THE ENTRANCE
WE OPEN WALL! KILL AURO!
A DEAFENING ROAR ROCKS THE BOULDER..IN REVERSE... SEALING THE FISSURE AND THE MENACE OF THE BLOOD CULT FOREVER!
EEAH!
AURO AND MEENA RETURN TO THE PEACEFUL JUPITERIAN CITY. . . .
WHERE AURO IS WILDLY CHEERED BY A GRATEFUL POPULACE.
HAIL, AURO, MIGHTY LORD OF JUPITER!
THE POWERS OF EVIL RISE AGAIN TO BRING DEATH TO JUPITER, BUT AURO BATTLES FURIOUSLY TO DESTROY THE ENEMY IN THE NEXT PLANET COMICS

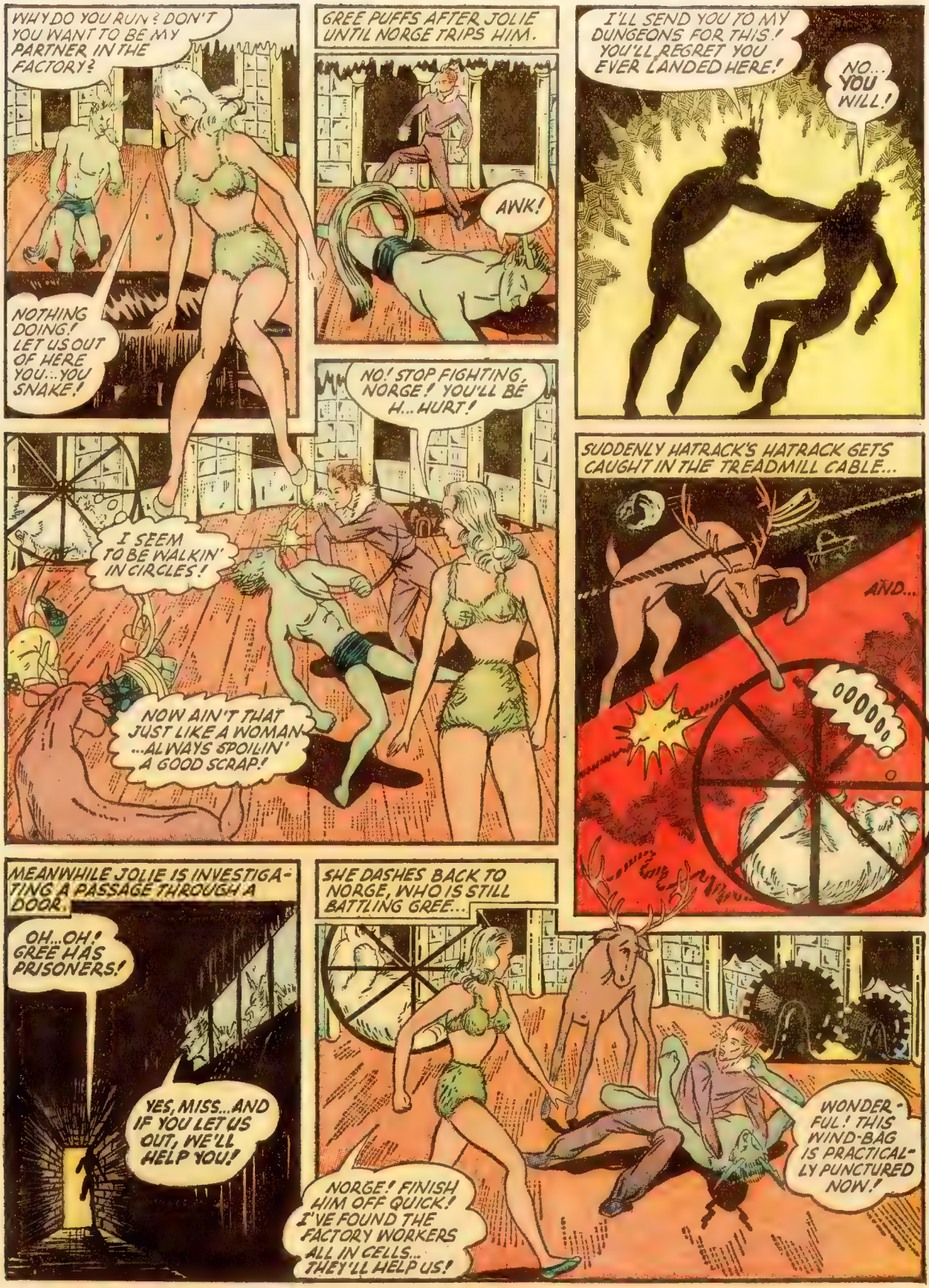
Norge BENSON

BY OLAF BJORN

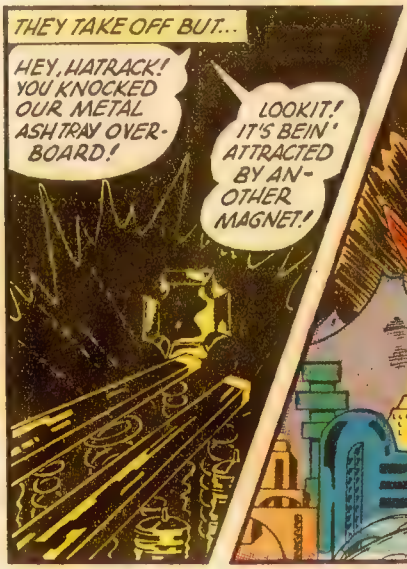
THE INHABITANTS OF PLUTO, HAVING WELCOMED THE FAIR JOLIE INTO THEIR MIDST, NOW TRIP EACH OTHER IN THE GREAT PLUTONIAN "SIGHT-SEEING ROCKET" TERMINAL, IN THEIR EAGERNESS TO GUIDE JOLIE ON A TOUR...
THEY CAN'T SEEM TO MAKE UP THEIR MINDS, JOLIE, ABOUT WHO IS TO CONDUCT YOUR TOUR!
TCH-TCH! SUCH BEDLAM!
BEFORE THE BICKERING PLUTONIANS WAKE UP, NORGE MANEUVERS THE ROCKET OUT OF THE TERMINAL, INTO ENDLESS SPACE.
GOOD, NORGE! WHILE THEY ARGUE, WE CAN TAKE A ROCKET OURSELVES!
YEP! AND I'LL DO THE HONORS!

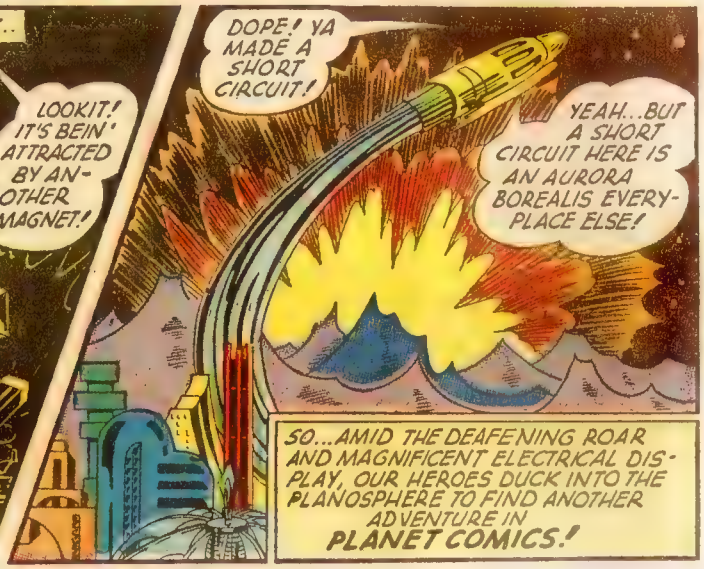
SOON THEY FLY OVER AURORA ABYSS...
I ALWAYS WANTED TO EXPLORE THAT PLACE... THEY SAY QUEER LIGHTS AND SOUNDS COME FROM THE ABYSS...
I'LL TAKE A LOOK, NORGE!
FAR, FAR BELOW, A STRANGE INDIVIDUAL SCOURS THE STRATOSPHERE
A MONSTER FLOATS YONDER ABOVE...TURN ON OUR MAGNETORS!
A POWERFUL MAGNETIC CURRENT TUGS THE ROCKET INTO THE DEPTHS OF AURORA ABYSS!
SAY! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA I'D LIKE TO KNOW! OOO...WH-WHO YOU?
NORGE! WHO ARE THEY?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?
I AIN'T WAITIN' TO ASK QUESTIONS!
NEITHER ARE THE MYSTERIOUS DWELLERS OF AURORA ABYSS, FOR, WITH BLOOD-CURDLING SCREECHES, THEY ATTACK!
EEAK!
I'LL...I'LL SCRATCH YOUR EYES OUT!
PIN YOURSELF ON MY HATRACK, YOU!
YOU AIN'T SO TASTY, BUD!
SUDDENLY ANOTHER STRANGE BEING INTERRUPTS THE WAR...
SILENCE!
MASTER GREE..
TAKE OUR PRISONERS TO THE FACTORY...
SO... OUR SIGHT-SEERS ARE HAULED UNCEREMONIOUSLY THROUGH HUGE GATES INTO THE...
AURORA BOREALIS MFG. CO.

IN THE FACTORY OFFICE, GREE PRONOUNCES THEIR SENTENCE...
YOU ARE TO BE SLAVES! I NEED LABOR TO RUN AN AURORA FACTORY...
ALREADY MY CUSTOMERS AT BOTH POLES ARE KICKING BECAUSE PRODUCTION OF AURORAE, THE NORTHERN LIGHTS, IS BEHIND SCHEDULE!
WE MAKE THE CHEMICALS HERE. I...AH...HAVE HAD LABOR TROUBLE, SO YOU COME IN VERY HANDY!
SLAVES? NEVER!
NORGE GETS MADDER AND MADDER...
IN TWO SECONDS I'LL RUN THIS PLACE! I'LL...
SH-H! BE PATIENT! WE'LL PLAY ALONG WITH GREE UNTIL WE FIGURE A WAY OUT!
WELL...ALL RIGHT... BUT I DON'T LIKE IT!
THE BEAR WILL TURN THE TREADMILL THAT RUNS THE FACTORY BELT...AND YOU, MY DEAR...
AND ME? SUCH HUMILIATION! MAKING AN ORDINARY WASHLINE OUTTA MY HATRACK!
MY HEART AIN'T IN THIS!


WHY DO YOU RUN? DON'T YOU WANT TO BE MY PARTNER IN THE FACTORY?
NOTHING DOING! LET US OUT OF HERE YOU...YOU SNAKE!
GREE PUFFS AFTER JOLIE UNTIL NORGE TRIPS HIM.
AWK!
I'LL SEND YOU TO MY DUNGEONS FOR THIS! YOU'LL REGRET YOU EVER LANDED HERE!
NO... YOU WILL!
NO! STOP FIGHTING, NORGE! YOU'LL BE H...HURT!
I SEEM TO BE WALKIN' IN CIRCLES!
NOW AIN'T THAT JUST LIKE A WOMAN ...ALWAYS SPOILIN' A GOOD SCRAP!
SUDDENLY HATRACK'S HATRACK GETS CAUGHT IN THE TREADMILL CABLE...
AND...
OOOOOO
MEANWHILE JOLIE IS INVESTIGATING A PASSAGE THROUGH A DOOR.
OH...OH! GREE HAS PRISONERS!
YES, MISS...AND IF YOU LET US OUT, WE'LL HELP YOU!
SHE DASHES BACK TO NORGE, WHO IS STILL BATTLING GREE...
NORGE! FINISH HIM OFF QUICK! I'VE FOUND THE FACTORY WORKERS ALL IN CELLS... THEY'LL HELP US!
WONDERFUL! THIS WIND-BAG IS PRACTICALLY PUNCTURED NOW!

BUT TO GET TO THE CELL BLOCK, NORGE MUST BATTLE LOYAL GREE MEN WHO APPEAR SUDDENLY..
LEMME POKE HIM ONE, NORGE!
TRIP HIM OVER ME, NORGE!
WHEW! GLAD THAT'S OVER WITH! NOW... IS THIS WHERE JOLIE SAID THE PRISONERS ARE?
SUDDENLY HE STEPS PAST AN ELECTRIC EYE AND..
OMIGOSH! OMIGOSH!
SHOCK! BUT NORGE ESCAPES UNCONSCIOUSNESS. SOON HE REACHES THE PRISON DOOR...
JOLIE SHOULD HAVE OPENED THIS... BUT I GUESS SHE WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH!
GREE'S PRISONERS ARE FREE!
COME WITH ME!
WE'LL TAKE OVER THE FACTORY AND RUN IT OURSELVES!
MEANWHILE, GREE HAS REVIVED ENOUGH TO APPROACH JOLIE AGAIN.
COME, GIRL!
THIS STICK IN BACK OF ME.
ATTAGIRL, JOLIE!
... GREE TURNS WHITE WITH FEAR.
THE ELECTRO-WAND! PUT IT DOWN!
BUT JOLIE WAVES IT MORE WILDLY.
IT MUST BE MAGIC TO MAKE GREE SO FRIGHTENED!
THE FACTORY GOES THROUGH A SERIES OF ELECTRICAL SHOCKS.. RAINBOW FLASHES BURY THE WHOLE PLACE UNDER A CURTAIN OF SEETHING, GLOWING LIGHTS
THE AURORA! SHE'S TURNED IT ON!




DOPE! YA MADE A SHORT CIRCUIT!
YEAH...BUT A SHORT CIRCUIT HERE IS AN AURORA BOREALIS EVERYPLACE ELSE!
SO...AMID THE DEAFENING ROAR AND MAGNIFICENT ELECTRICAL DISPLAY, OUR HEROES DUCK INTO THE PLANOSPHERE TO FIND ANOTHER ADVENTURE IN PLANET COMICS!

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, etc., required by the Acts of Congress of August 24, 1912, and March 3, 1933, of PLANET COMICS, published bi-monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1942

State of New York, County of New York, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Larabie Cunningham, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of the PLANET COMICS, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Love Romances Publishing Company, Inc., 461 Eighth Ave., New York City; Editor, Larabie Cunningham, 461 Eighth Ave., New York City; Managing Editor, None; Business Manager, T. T. Scott, 461 Eighth Ave., New York City

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Love Romances Publishing Company, Inc., 461 Eighth Avenue, New York City; J. G. Scott, 461 Eighth Avenue, New York City.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is ..... (This information is required from daily publications only.)

(Signed) LARABIE CUNNINGHAM,
Editor.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of September, 1942.

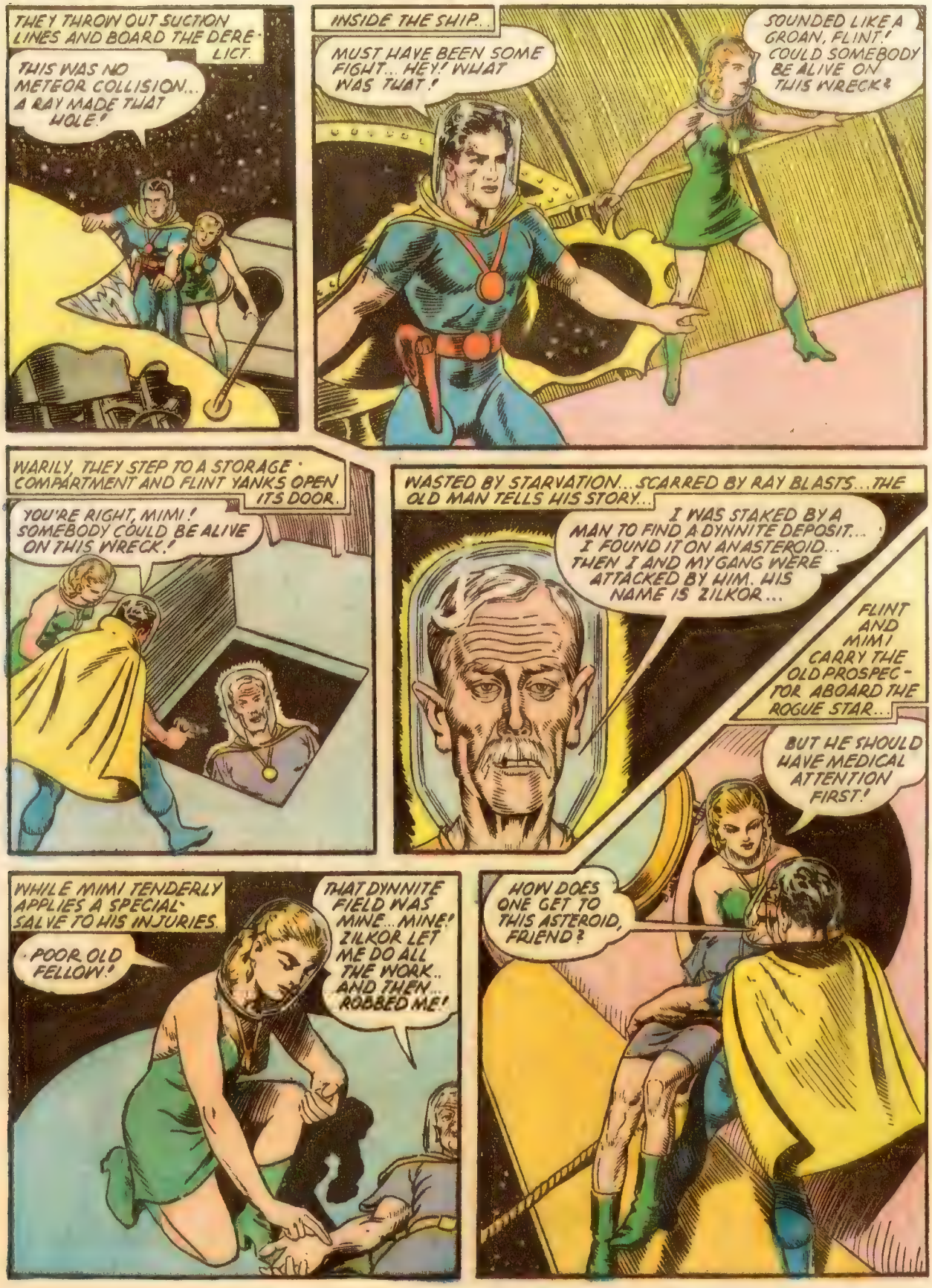
(Signed) GEORGE G. SCHWENKE,
Notary Public.

(My commission expires March 30, 1944.)

FLINT BAKER

by HUXLEY HALDANE

FLINT BAKER, ACE OF THE GALAXIES, RACES TOWARD A SINISTER ASTEROID TO RIGHT A WRONG. BUT BOTH MONSTERS AND MEN LIE IN WAIT FOR HIM!
CRUISING ALONG THE SPACE LANES, FLINT'S ROGUE STAR SUDDENLY ALMOST RAMS A GHOST THAT DRIFTS ACROSS ITS PATH.
FLINT AND MIMI DETERMINE TO INVESTIGATE...
WE SHOULD REPORT IT ANYWAY..!
YOU DO LOVE TROUBLE, DON'T YOU?

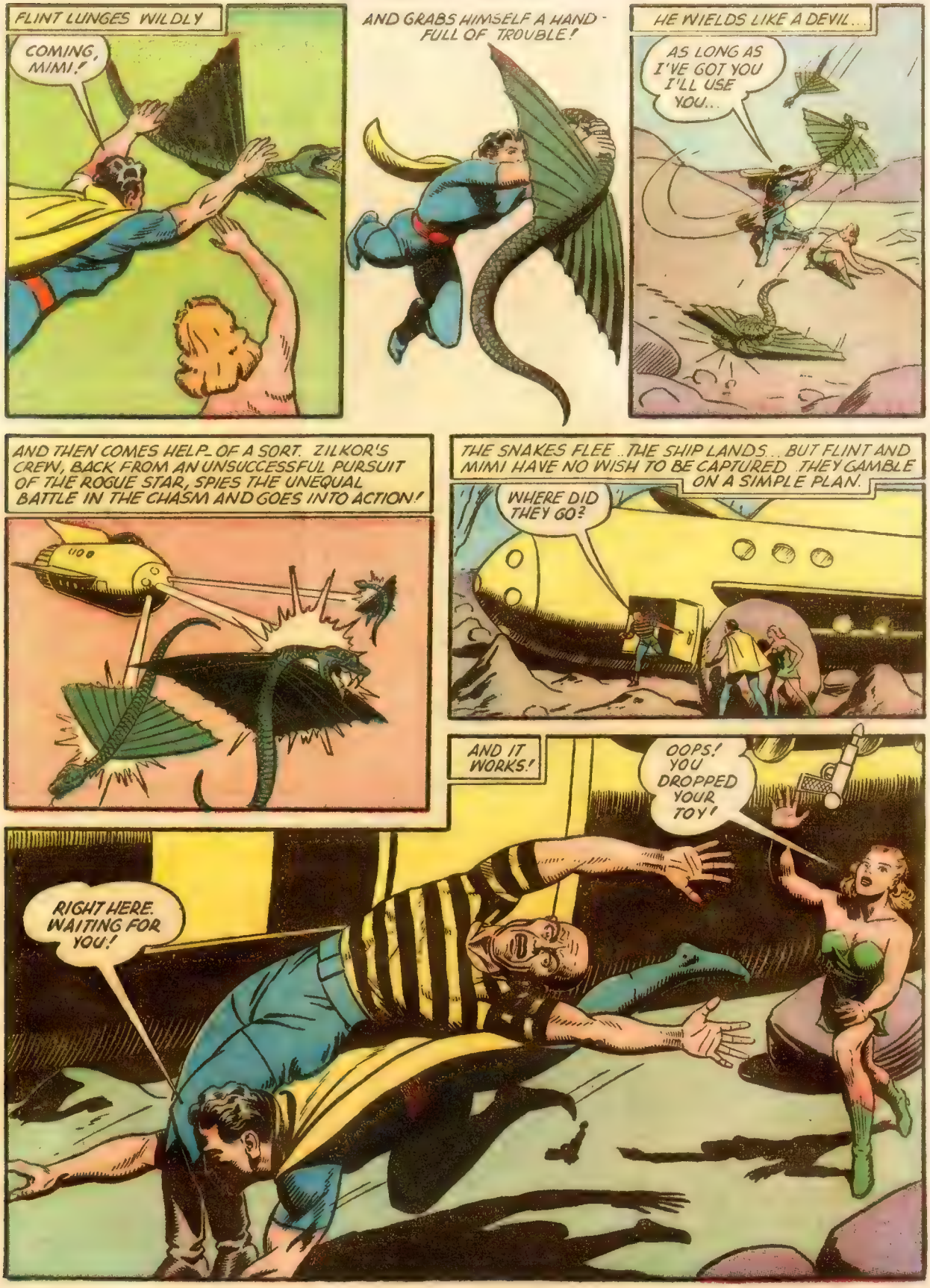

THEY THROW OUT SUCTION LINES AND BOARD THE DERELICT.
THIS WAS NO METEOR COLLISION... A RAY MADE THAT HOLE!
INSIDE THE SHIP...
MUST HAVE BEEN SOME FIGHT... HEY! WHAT WAS THAT!
SOUNDED LIKE A GROAN, FLINT! COULD SOMEBODY BE ALIVE ON THIS WRECK?
WARILY, THEY STEP TO A STORAGE COMPARTMENT AND FLINT YANKS OPEN ITS DOOR.
YOU'RE RIGHT, MIMI! SOMEBODY COULD BE ALIVE ON THIS WRECK!
WASTED BY STARVATION... SCARRED BY RAY BLASTS... THE OLD MAN TELLS HIS STORY...
I WAS STAKED BY A MAN TO FIND A DYNNITE DEPOSIT... I FOUND IT ON AN ASTEROID... THEN I AND MY GANG WERE ATTACKED BY HIM. HIS NAME IS ZILKOR...
FLINT AND MIMI CARRY THE OLD PROSPECTOR ABOARD THE ROGUE STAR...
BUT HE SHOULD HAVE MEDICAL ATTENTION FIRST!
WHILE MIMI TENDERLY APPLIES A SPECIAL SALVE TO HIS INJURIES.
POOR OLD FELLOW!
THAT DYNNITE FIELD WAS MINE... MINE! ZILKOR LET ME DO ALL THE WORK.. AND THEN... ROBBED ME!
HOW DOES ONE GET TO THIS ASTEROID, FRIEND?

BLAZING WITH RAGE, FLINT LEAPS TO THE CONTROLS...
YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF HIM, MIM! THIS CALLS FOR INSTANT ACTION!
A PAIR OF EVIL EYES INTERCEPT THE ROGUE STAR AS IT BORES THROUGH SPACE TOWARD ITS OBJECTIVES!
ZILKOR...ON THE LOOKOUT!
HMM! COMING A LITTLE TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT... MY COMFORT!
THE ROGUE STAR APPROACHES THE SINISTER LITTLE ASTEROID.
WATCH OUT FOR ZILKOR, MY FRIENDS!
WE'LL LAND ON THE DARK SIDE!
BUT FLINT IS NOT CAREFUL ENOUGH. AS HE AND MIM STEP OUT...
TAKE 'EM ALIVE!
FLINT! LOOK OUT!
FLINT'S GUN FLAMES ONCE...AND THEN ZILKOR'S MEN ARE SWARMING OVER HIM.
GOT HIM!
WHERE DO THEY ALL COME FROM?

THEY ARE BROUGHT BEFORE ZILKOR...
WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
WE'RE LOOKING FOR A RAT!
...BUT THE OLD PROSPECTOR, HIS PRESENCE UNSUSPECTED, STAGGERS TO THE ROGUE STAR'S CONTROLS...
I MUST GET HELP...
...AND A STARTLED GUARD BURSTS IN ON ZILKOR'S CROSS-EXAMINATION...
THEIR SHIP IS GONE! THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE ELSE ABOARD!
INSTANTLY, ZILKOR FLIES INTO A RAGE...
FOOL, NOT TO HAVE SEARCHED THE SHIP! AFTER IT...QUICKLY!
IN THE RESULTING CONFUSION ZILKOR IS LEFT MOMENTARILY ALONE AND FLINT SEIZES HIS OPPORTUNITY!
THIS IS OUR CUE, MIMI... COME ON!
THEY DASH AWAY FROM ZILKOR'S CAMP!
ONLY THING TO DO JUST NOW IS GET AWAY FROM THERE!

LET'S DUCK DOWN INTO THIS VALLEY... WE'VE GOT TO FIGURE A WAY OUT OF THIS
BUT
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S COMING OUR WAY!
WHAT IS THIS WINGED HORROR FROM THE SKY?
THEY DODGE ANOTHER...
WE'LL HAVE TO STEP LIVELY!
UGH! WHAT NASTY THINGS!
FLINT HURLS MIMI DOWN...AND THE FLYING SNAKE SLAMS INTO A BOULDER!
THE AIR IS FILLED WITH THEM!
QUICK! THIS CAVE!
ONCE IN THE CAVE, FLINT WHIRLS...ROLLS A HUGE BOULDER AGAINST THE MOUTH. MIMI TURNS IN RELIEF...AND SCREAMS!
FLINT! LOOK!

A HORRIBLE PHOSPHORESCENT MASS ROLLS FORWARD OVER GHASTLY REMAINS.
A MOBILE FUNGUS, LURKING IN THE CAVE TO DEVOUR WHATEVER MANAGES TO ESCAPE THE FLYING SNAKES!
I'LL TRY FEEDING IT SOME STONES!
RELENTLESSLY IT ADVANCES...UNHEEDING THE MISSILES THEY RAIN UPON IT.
ROCKS WON'T STOP IT!
SEEING THE USELESSNESS OF THEIR EFFORTS, FLINT MAKES A DESPERATE DECISION...
WE'RE SUNK IN HERE!
OUTSIDE WE'VE GOT A FIGHTING CHANCE... OR HAVE WE?
THE SNAKES LOSE NO TIME IN RE-NEWING THE ATTACK...
MIMI'S FOOT SLIPS ON A LOOSE STONE...SHE FALLS... AND THE THE FLYING DEATH SWOOPS DOWN!

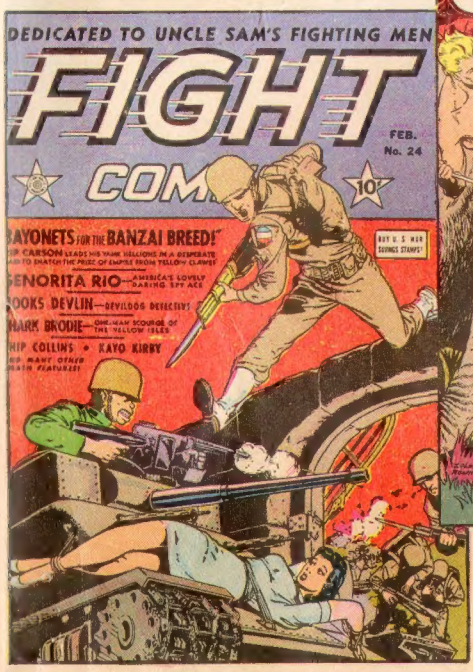

FLINT LUNGES WILDLY
COMING, MIMI!
AND GRABS HIMSELF A HAND-FULL OF TROUBLE!
HE WIELDS LIKE A DEVIL...
AS LONG AS I'VE GOT YOU I'LL USE YOU...
AND THEN COMES HELP—OF A SORT. ZILKOR'S CREW, BACK FROM AN UNSUCCESSFUL PURSUIT OF THE ROGUE STAR, SPIES THE UNEQUAL BATTLE IN THE CHASM AND GOES INTO ACTION!
THE SNAKES FLEE...THE SHIP LANDS...BUT FLINT AND MIMI HAVE NO WISH TO BE CAPTURED. THEY GAMBLE ON A SIMPLE PLAN.
WHERE DID THEY GO?
AND IT WORKS!
OOPS! YOU DROPPED YOUR TOY!
RIGHT HERE. WAITING FOR YOU!

THE REST OF THE CREW, DUMB-FOUNDED BY THE QUICK-ACTING PAIR, ARE EASILY COWED... FLINT HEADS THE SHIP TOWARD ZILKOR'S HEADQUARTERS.
ONE MORE LITTLE DETAIL TO ATTEND TO!
BUT THE WILY OLD CROOK OVERLOOKS FEW BETS AS LONG AS THE TWO WHO ELUDED HIM ARE STILL AT LARGE. HE HIDES UNTIL FLINT AND MIMI, HERDING THE CREW, HAVE PASSED...THEN..
I'LL TAKE CHARGE FROM HERE ON!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR INTERFERENCE...STAND BACK, MEN, WHILE I LET THEM HAVE IT!
SUDDENLY, OUT OF NOWHERE, COMES THE BLINDING BURST OF AN AVENGING RAY!
AND ROGUE STAR DRIVES DOWN!
...THE OLD PROSPECTOR STEPS OUT.
WILL YOU STAY? I'LL SHARE THE DYNNITE FIELD WITH YOU!
THANKS, PAL... YOU FOUND IT...YOU KEEP IT! GOODBYE ...AND GOOD LUCK!
FIERCELY IT'S BOW PROJECTOR BURNS DOWN THE PIRATES.
THEN, WHEN ALL HAVE BEEN BLASTED, THE SHIP SETTLES...
★★ Buy ★★
WAR BONDS AND STAMPS
FOR VICTORY
AND SO..ONCE AGAIN FLINT BAKER AND MIMI GO THEIR PEACEFUL WAY.. OR IS IT PEACEFUL? WHAT NEW ADVENTURE AWAITS THEM IN THE NEXT
PLANET COMICS?

PLANET COMICS GOES ON SALE THE 10th

WHY GUESS?

GET THE BEST



FIGHTING ACES OF WAR SKIES
WINGS
COMICS
DEDICATED TO AMERICAN FLYING ACES WHO ARE CARRYING THE STARS AND STRIPES TO THE SKY SO THAT FREEDOM MAY PREVAIL

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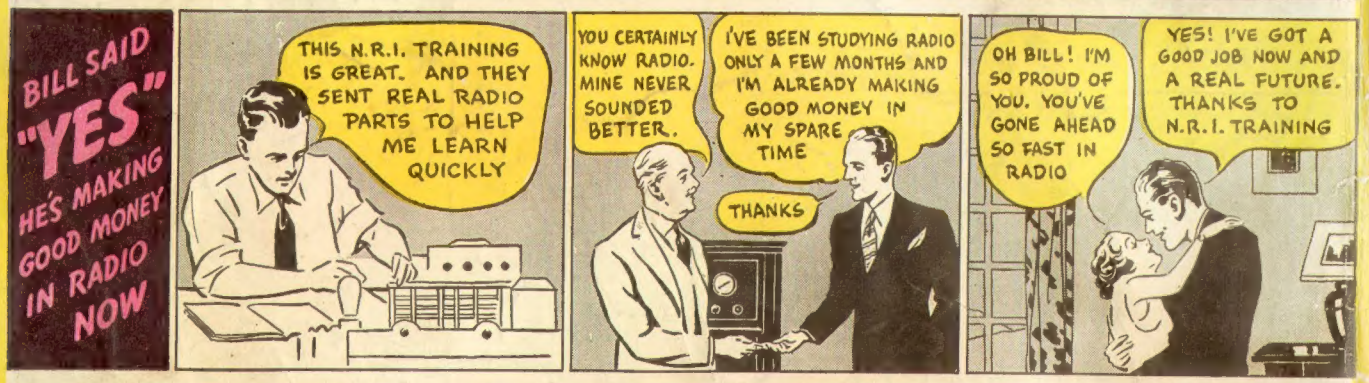
FICTION HOUSE MAGAZINES

LOOK FOR THE BULL'S-EYE

LOOK FOR THE BULL'S-EYE

FICTION HOUSE MAGAZINES

YES- I'M CONVINCED THAT I CAN MAKE GOOD MONEY IN RADIO. I'M GOING TO START TRAINING FOR RADIO RIGHT NOW.
NO- NOT ME. I'M NOT GOING TO WASTE MY TIME. SUCCESS IS JUST A MATTER OF LUCK AND I WASN'T BORN LUCKY.


BILL SAID "YES" HE'S MAKING GOOD MONEY IN RADIO NOW
THIS N.R.I. TRAINING IS GREAT. AND THEY SENT REAL RADIO PARTS TO HELP ME LEARN QUICKLY
YOU CERTAINLY KNOW RADIO. MINE NEVER SOUNDED BETTER.
I'VE BEEN STUDYING RADIO ONLY A FEW MONTHS AND I'M ALREADY MAKING GOOD MONEY IN MY SPARE TIME
THANKS
OH BILL! I'M SO PROUD OF YOU. YOU'VE GONE AHEAD SO FAST IN RADIO
YES! I'VE GOT A GOOD JOB NOW AND A REAL FUTURE. THANKS TO N.R.I. TRAINING

TOM SAID "NO" HE'S STILL WAITING FOR "LUCK"
BILL'S A SAP TO WASTE HIS TIME STUDYING RADIO AT HOME
SAME OLD GRIND -- SAME SKINNY PAY ENVELOPE -- I'M JUST WHERE I WAS FIVE YEARS AGO
GUESS I'M A FAILURE. LOOKS LIKE I'LL NEVER GET ANYWHERE
YOU'LL ALWAYS BE A FAILURE, TOM, UNLESS YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. WISHING AND WAITING WON'T GET YOU ANYWHERE

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Age.....

Name .....

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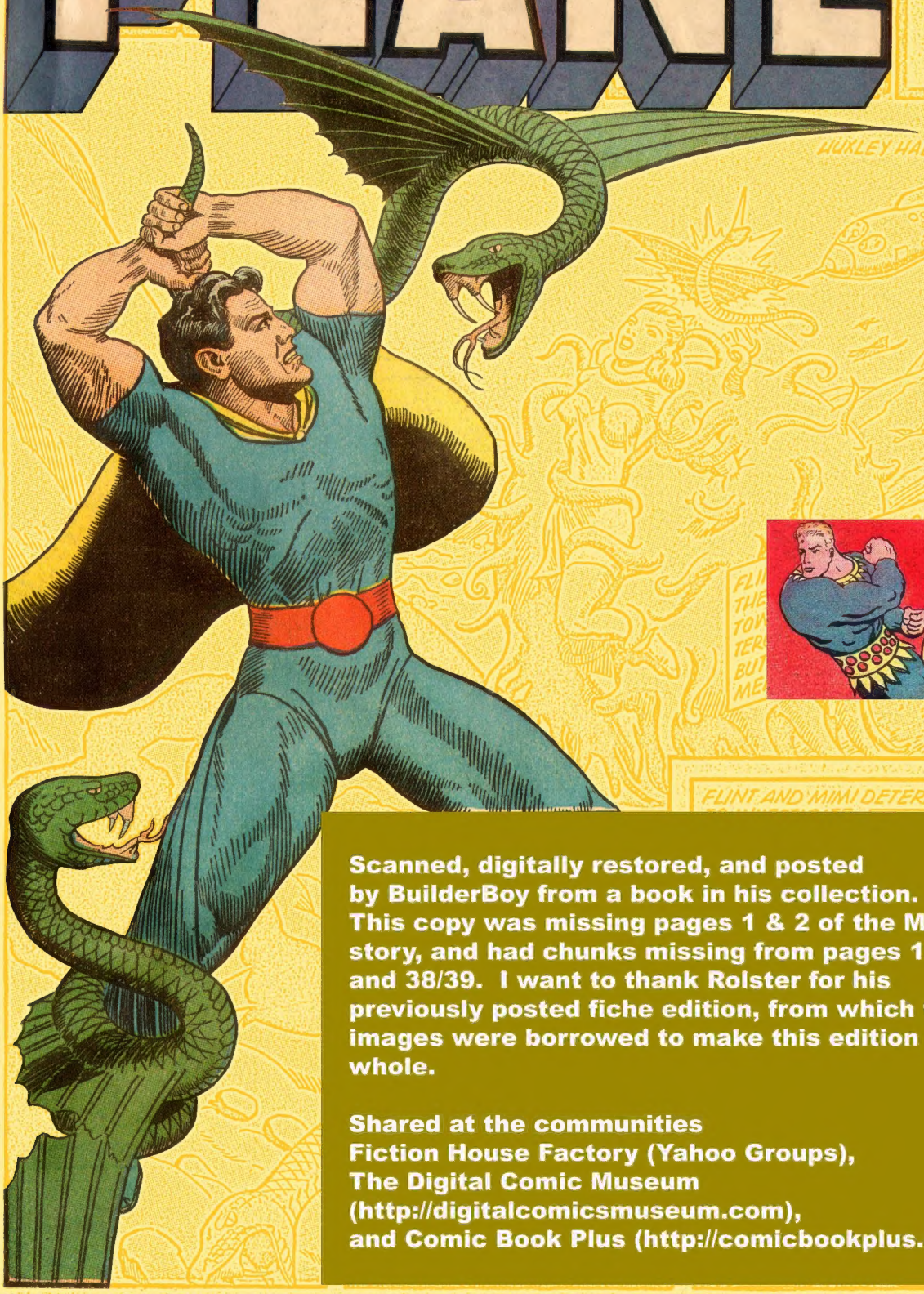
PLANET



Scanned, digitally restored, and posted by BuilderBoy from a book in his collection. This copy was missing pages 1 & 2 of the Mars story, and had chunks missing from pages 13/14 and 38/39. I want to thank Rolster for his previously posted fiche edition, from which the images were borrowed to make this edition whole.

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